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Decorative Arts

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For further information, please write to MESDA, Box 10310, Salem Station, Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27108. Telephone (919) 721-7360.

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KENNETH JOEL ZOGRY

Editor's preface:

The primary business of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts is the discovery and interpretation of objects made in the South. In this research, which has been underway for almost two decades and will continue far into the future, furniture quite naturally emerges as the most prevalent surviving form of early southern material culture. Of particular interest to MESDA is furniture made in the Chesapeake, low country, or backcountry that reveals the presence of unique regional styles. Like the early householders who owned such pieces, however, the furniture itself inevitably must be seen as a blending of diverse cultural backgrounds. The same may be said of all American furniture.

The impetus for the development of regional styles lay in various factors. The most important of these was the emigration of artisans themselves, cabinetmakers who brought with them the stylistic vocabularies of the regions in which they were trained, whether Britain, the Continent, or some region of America. Another component of the transmission of style was the importation of furniture from outside, a phenomenon which began early in the South, and which in turn encouraged the movement of artisans as well. Except for the largest urban shops, few cabinetmaking establishments in the South could maintain a standing inventory. Most of the furniture that they made represented "bespoke" or ordered work, and there is ample evidence that many southern shops could not meet the demand, at least during the colonial period. Because of this, and due also to even more complex matters which this issue of the Journal addresses, large northern cabinetmaking establishments found a ready market in the South that steadily increased during the colonial period, and blossomed into an extraordinary amount of trade following the Revolution.

From southern port records and newspapers, we know that at least the following northern towns and cities exported furniture to the South in the coastwise trade: Portland and Bath in Maine; Portsmouth and Manchester in New Hampshire; Newburyport, Beverly, Salem, Marblehead, Boston, and Plymouth in Massachusetts; Providence and Newport in Rhode Island; Norwich, New London, Middletown, and New Haven in Connecticut; and New York and Philadelphia. Of these the major exporting centers were Portsmouth, Salem, Boston, Providence, Newport, New York, and Philadelphia. We illustrate work from most of these in this issue; Portsmouth, or Piscataqua as it was

called, is not well-represented in the MESDA research files, which is surprising in view of the quantity of furniture, particularly chairs, shipped to the South. Some of the ports listed here very likely did not supply anything other than the vessel itself. For example, a vessel from Beverly or Marblehead almost certainly was laden with Salem or Boston furniture.

It is impossible to understand southern furniture styles if we consider each region in a vacuum and ignore the winds of fashion that blew from outside. Every southern coastal cabinetmaking center was affected to one degree or another by urban northern styles, particularly those of the Boston orbit and New York. The entire southern backcountry was powerfully influenced by the pervasive trends of the Delaware Valley, where Philadelphia was the source of an entire gamut of fashionable furniture design much in the same fashion that Paris long held stylistic sway in Europe. This is one especially important reason to understand the existence of northern American furniture in the South, but there are other reasons as well. The growth of the industrial North in the nineteenth century, and the consequent vast increase in its exports, served in a great sense to provide a great stylistic "levelling" of the furniture of all the eastern seaboard. That is precisely why southern furniture after 1825 — with the exception of the isolated areas of the backcountry — often ceased to represent the more unique statements that it had made during the eighteenth century. That is not an acknowledgement of the failure of southern culture, but rather a pragmatic understanding of the patterns in which America grew in the nineteenth century. Furniture serves as one of the great barometers of fashion, utility, and the study of technology, and understanding the presence of northern work in the South, and how it came to be here, is instructive. For that purpose, we present here an overview of the system of exporting and retailing furniture in the South, a catalog of northern furniture owned by southerners, and a study of one southern family's experience in ordering northern work.

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Cabinet Warehousing in the Southern Atlantic Ports, 1783-1820

FORSYTH M. ALEXANDER

After the American Revolution, the newly-formed United States of America's economic history was characterized by a series of fluxes and ebbs not unusual for a country experimenting with trade practices and patterns. Unfortunately, the economies of the southern states, which had boomed during the late colonial period, began to weaken after the beginning of the nineteenth century with the exception of those of Maryland and Georgia. Many historians and economists have examined the causes of this decline in the South, citing as a major factor the move to a cotton-based agrarian community that relied heavily on slave labor and drained economic strength from southern urban areas.

There are other reasons as well. The cultivation of tobacco, the principal cash crop of tidewater Maryland and Virginia, became less economical. Soil exhaustion and lessened demand are commonly and erroneously blamed for the weakened tobacco trade. Although soil exhaustion did cause some problems, inflated slave prices and the growth of a grain agronomy north and northwest of the tobacco farmers in Virginia and Maryland actually were more significant factors. Planters who were not fortunate enough to inherit the large number of slaves required to produce tobacco had to purchase them at great expense. Many abandoned tobacco farming for raising grain and moved away from the tidewater regions. In coastal South Carolina, indigo no longer was a powerful economic base, for those profiting from its cultivation had relied heavily on British bounty lost at the outbreak of the Revolution. Further, its processing proved hazardous to both planters and laborers. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, much of the South began to experiment with the cultivation of cotton; however, it was not until after 1820 and the widespread use of Eli Whitney's improved cotton gin, that cotton became a profitable crop for any southern states other than South Carolina and Georgia.¹

As a result of the South's economic decline, as well as the debts accrued during the Revolution and the depreciation of paper currency, bankruptcies were common. Many southerners left for the western and southwestern territories opened in the nineteenth century, particularly Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Indiana, and Ohio. Those that remained in the South, especially in its urban areas, had to redefine their economic bases. By the second decade of the nineteenth century, urban southern artisans had lost much of their custom to insolvencies and migration, and those that did not declare bankruptcy themselves began to search for a means of remaining solvent in a changing economy. Many urban artisans in the South began to consider selling imported goods alongside their own products as a viable means of supplementing their incomes, and cabinetmakers were amongst this group.

Several factors were involved in this development, most of them associated with the inception of the nineteenth century and the industrial revolution. After the Revolution, the manufacturing capabilities of the northeastern states expanded to the extent that Congress began to examine different means of assuring the success of northern products. The most popular solutions were a series of protectionist duties and tariffs, beginning in 1789 with Alexander Hamilton's tariff bill, taxing foreign imports at an average of 8 percent.² English and French blockades in 1806 contributed to a lessening of European imports, followed by Thomas Jefferson's embargo of December 1807, the non-intercourse act of 1809, and the War of 1812.³ Basically, the United States was cut off from much of the European market from 1806 to 1815.

The South, which had relied on Europe for much of its manufactured goods and the Caribbean for raw materials like mahogany, found its imports from abroad curtailed, and as a result began to look to the Middle States as suppliers of many manufactured goods. About 1805 manufacturing there began rising sharply. Aided by the tariffs and blockades, the industries of New York and Philadelphia in particular expanded, and as early as 1806 their products were shipped southward.⁴ Even after 1816, when foreign products began flooding the market and northerners began clamoring for more protectionist measures, domestic manufacturing was firmly entrenched in the Middle States.

Better transportation also played an important role in opening lines of trade between the North and South. Roads were improved

and turnpikes built after 1800. Waterways, most notably the Potomac River, were refined. Maryland chartered a company to cut a canal between the Delaware River and the Chesapeake Bay after the Revolution, and a canal was built through the Dismal Swamp of Virginia and North Carolina. In South Carolina, the Santee River Canal linked that river with Cooper's Creek.⁵ These improvements, combined with the advent of the steamboat and better roads shortened travel time. The distance between northern commercial centers and southern ports and collecting centers effectively lessened at the same time.

These factors made it necessary for the urban southern cabinet-making communities to take advantage of the shifting trade patterns. The exception to this was Baltimore, which eventually became a supplier. Philadelphia, New York, and Boston had been developing large furniture-making centers, the proprietors of which viewed the South as a large new market for their fashionable work. The popularity of Philadelphia Windsor chairs and New York furniture, their lower prices, and the new-found availability of these items in the South most likely drove many southern cabinetmakers out of business. Also, the production of Neoclassical furniture with its veneer and inlays was better suited to large urban areas where many hands, each with its own specialization, could be involved in the shop-to-wareroom process. Many southern artisans, even the stylish Charlestonians, found the new fashion of furniture expensive, time- and labor-consuming, and difficult to produce in small shops with few extra hands. Therefore, southern cabinetmakers who wished to remain in the trade found a solution in the importation of northern furniture — cabinet warehousing. This was carried out either in alliance with northeastern merchants or even northern cabinetmakers, although the most successful southern shops also managed to sell their own products as well.

The sale of imported furniture actually had its American beginnings with the settlement of the first colonies. A few extant seventeenth century documents demonstrate that household furnishings were exported to the South from England and New England at an early date. In Maryland, the 5 July 1669 inventory of William Parrott's estate listed "Six New England Chaires" valued at 48 pounds of tobacco. Similarly, on 4 May 1675, the appraisers of Thomas Boocock's estate in Westmoreland County, Virginia, recorded "8 newengland Chairs at 12 £96."⁶ Fifteen years later, on 8 August 1690, William Byrd I of Virginia wrote

Perry and Lane, London merchants: "I am now building at Westopher & desire you to Send mee One Bedstead Curtains, wth all manner furniture, Chairs, table, Looking Glass for a Chamber to bee Handsome & neat, but cheap, also 1 doz. best Rushia Lether Chairs, 1 Small, 1 Middling & 1 large Ovall table. . . ."⁷

As the above letter exemplifies, overseas furniture orders and sales before 1750 usually were the domain of merchants who imported all sorts of goods. In what apparently was the earliest Charleston newspaper advertisement of imports other than flour, Yeomans and Escott, merchants, advertised in 1732 that they had "Lately imported . . . Paint, sealing Wax, cain Chairs, shot and Bullets. . . ."⁸ Yeomans and Prescott did not state the origin of their imports. They may have been shipped from Boston, although it is equally possible that they had come from England. In 1757 George Patten of Annapolis announced that he had received from New York, in the sloop Anthony, "Corner cup-boards, Square Tables, Bureaus, Desks, Card and Tea Tables, all made of Mahogany: Likewise, Loaf-Sugar, Powder Ditto, Coffee, Claret, Salt, and Rum." These early retailers generally were not connected with the furniture business; however, one advertisement in the *South-Carolina Gazette* did forecast the role that cabinetmakers and artisans in related trades would begin to play in the sale of imported furniture later in the eighteenth century. William Morgan's notice of 29 June 1734 stated that he was selling "tea boxes, peer-glasses, swinging glasses, and several other goods" at the house of William Watson. Watson was a Charleston joiner and cabinetmaker.

The earliest furniture retailers that could be classified as warehousemen were the New England cabinetmakers who made furniture to be sold as venture cargo in the southern colonies as well as the West Indies and the coast of Africa. The furniture either was displayed and sold by cabinetmakers or, more commonly, by shippers, consignment merchants, and vendue masters. As early as 1744 furniture was sent out from Boston to various destinations: New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, the West Indies, and Newfoundland. At this time the consignments were small, but after the Revolution northern artisans often made large shipments.⁹ Some northern artisans even traveled with their furniture to the south, particularly after 1790; some of these cabinetmakers often only remained there long enough to sell one shipment, and others

journeyed back and forth for several years. In this study, the term “venturer” will be used to denote a cabinetmaker who traveled with his ware rather than consigning it to ship captains or merchants.

In the eighteenth century there also were artisans in trades related to cabinetmaking such as carvers, upholsterers, clockmakers, and carpenters, who hired workmen and cabinetmakers to make furniture that could then be sold in a shop or warehouse. Richard Moncrieff of Charleston, who advertised in 1749 that at his shop “all sorts of cabinetwork is neatly made,” and Gamaliel Butler of Annapolis, who “engaged in a very good Workman in the CABINET-WAY,” were two examples of these early warehousemen.¹⁰ Some of these retailers also imported items that they might or might not have “made up”. Others travelled to new areas selling items made at their original shops.

In 1791 John Bankson and Richard Lawson advertised that they had “imported *in the Ship* Chesapeake . . . from London . . . [and were] opening at their Cabinet Warehouse, and Manufactory, in Light Street . . . a very General Assortment of Looking Glasses, Tea-Chests and Tea-Caddies. . . .”¹¹ John Bankson had used the term in advertisements as early as 1784. However, the 1791 newspaper notice was the first time in the South that “cabinet warehouse” was used to signify the sales of imported furniture, furniture made by artisans other than the cabinetmaker retailing it, or furniture made by the artisan in a different city or area and sold as venture cargo. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “warehouse” has been used since the fourteenth century to describe a “building or part of a building used for the storage of merchandise,” as well as a “a building in which furniture or other property is housed, a charge being made for the accommodation.” In the sixteenth century, the definition “a tradesman’s inner or back shop” was assigned the term. By the eighteenth century, it was used in England as a more dignified synonym for shop. About 1730 Edward Burt, in *A Letter from a Gentleman in the North of Scotland*, wrote “Here and there you may now see an ordinary shop dubbed with the important title of a Warehouse.” By the 1780s southern cabinetmakers were using it to differentiate between a separate room or building for the sale of furniture and the shop where the furniture was made. Those southerners who used their warehouses or warerooms for the sale of imported furniture have come to be known as cabinet warehousemen or warehousemen.

In the case of most of the South's furniture warehousemen, a background in one of the furniture-making trades separated them from merchants and grocers. However, some southern warehousemen, such as Edward G. Sass and Richard W. Otis of Charleston, Richmond and Allen of Savannah, and Samuel Ward of Alexandria, all of whom sold furniture, also retailed other imported goods.¹² For the most part, though, southern warehousemen's most important merchandise was furniture and related items such as lumber, furniture hardware, and mattresses. Many of these retailers began their careers as cabinetmakers, upholsterers, or carvers, but shifted their interests to the selling of ready-made imported furniture sometime after 1805 for the reasons outlined previously. In some instances, the warehousemen had been successful cabinetmakers trained in the South; others were northern artisans who travelled south in the hope of increasing their markets. Some of these venturers even retained their original shops, relying on workmen or merchants to send them orders for goods.

Just as southern furniture itself maintains characteristics indigenous to the southern region or urban area in which it was made, so does the history of cabinet warehousemen in their specific southern regions. For example, at the time that cabinet warehousing was gaining acceptance in Charleston, it had lost all of its allure in Baltimore. In Savannah the most successful warehousemen were New York artisans such as John Hewitt who sold their products in Georgia; in Virginia the most prominent warehousemen were tidewater cabinetmakers such as Chester Sully who exported their goods to other Virginia towns. Although there is evidence that coastal North Carolina cabinetmakers sold imported products, these artisans resisted the warehousing appellation as well as the phrases "imported from" and "just received," hinting in their advertisements that they had made the furniture they had on hand. Such disparities deserve recognition, for they indicate the uniqueness of each southern port's furniture makers, retailers, and buyers. The reasons why cabinet warehousing was more prevalent in some ports than others can be discerned from these differences as well.

It is appropriate that a coastwise study of cabinet warehousing in each southern port from Baltimore to Savannah begins with the former city. Baltimore's cabinet warehousing history is an early one and the first that outlines any degree of success. However, by the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century, the

Baltimore furniture industry had become large and profitable, and warehousing no longer was a necessary means of earning extra revenue. In that way, Baltimore differed with much of the South's urban areas, where successful cabinetmaking shops operated at the time Baltimore's cabinetmakers were selling wares imported from both Britain and Philadelphia. Conversely, when Norfolk, Charleston, and Savannah warehousemen were in the midst of importing furniture from the North, Baltimore cabinetmakers were exporting to other cities, both northern and southern, as well as to other continents.

The reasons for Baltimore's unique warehousing chronology lie in the history of the city. Although it was laid out in 1730, by the early 1750s Baltimore still was little more than a village. On the eve of the American Revolution, it was larger than Richmond, Petersburg, and Savannah with a population of 6,000, a total of six churches, and a newspaper, but it still was a small town compared to Philadelphia, Charleston, and New York. It was during the Revolution and the ensuing period under the articles of confederation that Baltimore finally began to grow, reaching a population of 13,000 in 1784.¹³ Baltimore merchants, faced with a decline in the tobacco trade in the 1780s, began to expand their markets. Grain, flour, and iron production began to outstrip tobacco in the Baltimore export markets, and those trading in these goods began to prosper.¹⁴ Although the years immediately following the war were characterized by depression, by the end of the 1780s Baltimore was a burgeoning commercial port. In the 1790s Baltimore's population doubled as immigrants arrived from the British Isles, France, and Germany, not a few of which were artisans and skilled laborers. In 1796 the city was incorporated.¹⁵

Baltimore continued to expand during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. In 1800 its population had risen to 30,000, and that number increased until 1816 when growth leveled off for a few years. Although for the most part Baltimore's economy also expanded in this period, there were a few setbacks. During the years 1801-3 about a hundred Baltimore merchants went bankrupt, blaming the Treaty of Amiens for their plight, and in 1807 the effects of the embargo were felt in a slackening of trade. The non-intercourse act of 1809 and the War of 1812, however, encouraged privateering and domestic manufacturing, and both activities were profitable.¹⁶

Because of its growth patterns, Baltimore did not develop a large community of cabinetmakers until after the 1790s. It is a reasonable assumption, then, that merchandisers of imported furniture and cabinet warehousemen in Baltimore prospered in the years following the Revolution until after 1800. Baltimore cabinetmakers' and warehousemen's advertisements from 1783 to 1800 generally bear the weight of that hypothesis; however, it should be emphasized that for a city of its size, there were not many cabinet warehousemen in Baltimore at any time.

Judging from newspaper notices, John Bankson and his various partners were Baltimore's most successful warehousemen before 1800. Little is known about Bankson and Gordon, Bankson's earliest partnership. On 18 May 1784 the partners announced that they were "in Possession of the CABINET WAREHOUSE, &c. formerly occupied by Mr. ROBERT MOORE, (who has declined that Business)," but other than their use of the term cabinet warehouse, there is nothing in that advertisement to indicate that they were selling anything but their own products. By June of the next year, their partnership had been dissolved. The partnership between Bankson and Richard Lawson, a London-trained cabinetmaker, then was formed, and it lasted almost seven years. Their advertisements indicate that they were selling imported furniture along with cabinetware they made themselves. Their most telling notice was that of 19 February 1790 when they announced the following in the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*:

Bankson and Lawson (At their CABINET and CHAIR MANUFACTORY . . .) HAVING considerably reduced the Prices of their furniture . . . respectfully inform their customers, and the Public in general, that they mean with the assistance of those Friends to American Manufactures, to extend that useful and necessary Branch, being aided by the Legislature of the United States. They flatter themselves, the importation of FURNITURE, from abroad, will be discontinued. . . .

Interestingly enough, they were advertising the sale of imported goods a year and a half later.¹⁷ Bankson and Lawson apparently also were involved in the venture cargo trade, for in 1786 they were advertising in Charleston, listing their prices, and naming "Bowen & Markland" as their agents. The partners sold lumber as well, as did most Baltimore cabinetmakers. That cabinet

warehousing was no longer profitable by the second decade of the nineteenth century in Baltimore is borne out by the fact that John Bankson was imprisoned for insolvency in 1813.¹⁸

Bankson and Lawson had only a few competitors. William Singleton and William McFadon were partners from 1790 to 1795.¹⁹ They mainly advertised as cabinet and chairmakers; however, in 1794 they were selling imported looking glasses as well as mahogany logs and planks.²⁰ In 1796 James and George Smith, carvers and gilders, were selling imported ladies' toilet and sewing glasses along with imported prints. They, too, were venturers, advertising in the *Charleston City Gazette and Daily Advertiser* of 23 March 1797 that they proposed "to execute ORDERS in the LINE of their PROFESSION, which the Citizens of Charleston may be disposed to favor them with." Interested persons could "apply at Mrs. MIOT's, No. 24, CHURCH-STREET, a few doors South of Tradd-street, where one of the partners [would] attend." After James Smith's death in 1797, his brother continued the business alone, advertising frequently from 1797 to 1822. In 1802, in addition to imported looking glasses, he was selling "several dozen elegant fancy chairs."²¹

It is difficult to determine the origin of Baltimore's imported furniture before 1800. Two newspaper notices that date before 1800 have been recorded at MESDA, and they list only London imports.²² Baltimore's trade with England and France was active in the 1790s, but it is likely that much of the cabinet ware arriving for sale in Baltimore before 1800 came from Philadelphia. The great number of extant Philadelphia pieces with Baltimore provenances attest to that possibility; it is also known that some New England furniture was being shipped to Baltimore at that time.²³ After 1800 there were a few instances of Philadelphia and New York furniture being warehoused in Baltimore. Joseph Barry, for example, a Philadelphia cabinetmaker and upholsterer who had been warehousing in Savannah in 1798, advertised in Baltimore on 5 February 1803 that he had imported "CABINET FURNITURE, of the newest London and French patterns" for sale. Barry placed at least three additional advertisements in Baltimore that year; however, his assortment of furniture was twice offered at public sale.²⁴ Although he was listed in the 1804 Baltimore city directory, it appears that Barry's Baltimore sojourn did not last beyond the end of 1803. He was listed in the Philadelphia city directories without a break from 1795 to 1820. Barring the numerous advertisements of carvers and gilders, other

artisans warehousing northern furniture in Baltimore from 1800 to 1820 included Moses Hand and John How. In 1802 Hand offered on commission a variety of sets of "New York Japann'd Fancy Chairs. . . . Cane and Rush Bottoms, richly ornamented and of the newest patterns, with arm chairs to match." He added that he expected a regular supply from the manufactory. How began advertising New York and Boston-made furniture in 1816; by 1818 he was bankrupt.²⁵ No other Baltimore warehousemen are known to have advertised, but several businesses were listed in the Baltimore city directories under such titles as "furniture store proprietor," "furniture ware room," and "auctioneer," each of which implied a warehousing function. Because these men did not advertise, however, it is difficult to determine whether they actually were warehousemen rather than simply shopkeepers.

Bankson's and How's bankruptcies were indicators of the expansion of Baltimore's own cabinet trade. After Baltimore cabinetmaking and chairmaking production rose sharply after the turn of the century, the market for imported foreign or domestic commodities appears to have diminished. Instead Baltimore cabinet and chairmakers began to export their own wares. Hugh and John Finlay, the renowned fancy furniture makers, were probably the most notable of the Baltimore furniture exporters and venturers. In 1803 they were trying to find a market for their work in Charleston, although apparently there was none to be found.²⁶ A lengthy advertisement in the Baltimore *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser* of 7 November 1805 ended with the postscript "Orders for the West Indies, or any part of the continent, executed with dispatch." In 1817, after John Finlay had left the business, and Hugh was working as "Hugh Finlay and Co.," Hugh offered "Split Rattan, For Chairs, Sofas & Window Seats, in packages of 60 to 70 lbs. each — for sale" and added, after his address, "The editors of newspapers in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston are requested to run the above ad in their respective newspapers."²⁷

There were, of course, other Baltimore cabinet and chairmakers trying to capitalize on the popularity of fancy and Windsor chairs and Baltimore furniture in general. From December 1802 to January 1803, Edward Priestley, who was making furniture in Baltimore from 1801 to 1822, was selling "excellent *Mahogany Furniture*" from Baltimore at "Johnson & Robertson & Co.'s old Compting hou[se]" in Savannah, and in his notices, it is likely he was describing work from his own shop.²⁸ John B. Taylor, in

a cabinet and chairmaking partnership with John Coleman from 1800 to 1809, was in Alexandria, Virginia, in 1804, advertising that he had received "from the manufactory of Coleman & Taylor, Baltimore, PLAIN and ELEGANT FURNITURE" that consisted of "cellaret sideboards," sideboard tables with marble tops, secretaries, book cases, bureaus, work tables, candle stands, card tables, dining and breakfast tables. In 1809, Matthew McCollm, a Baltimore chairmaker, announced that he had "75 dozen chairs, Suitable for exportation." Francis Younker, another chairmaker, stated in a 12 September 1810 notice that he had an extensive variety of "PLAIN & FANCY CHAIRS" that "Merchants intending to export chairs and Country Merchants will find their interest in examining his stock."²⁹ In 1813, a partnership known only as Ringgold and Bradley advertised in New Bern, North Carolina, that they had just received "from New York per sch'r John Jones, Capt. Gould, a large supply of GROCERY GOODS, and Northern Produce . . . Also, a quantity of elegant MAHOGANY FURNITURE."³⁰ Even though that advertisement implied that the furniture had come from New York, it is possible that Benjamin Ringgold, a Baltimore cabinetmaker and grocer working from 1812 to 1817, was the Ringgold of the notice. In a Baltimore *American Commercial and Daily Advertiser* notice of 5 October 1820 Jacob Daley, also a chairmaker, invited "Shippers and others wishing to make up orders for abroad" to call at his shop where they could be supplied with "Chairs and Fancy Furniture" in any amounts "on the most pleasing terms." There was even a Baltimore manufacturer of "Stringing, Banding, and Shells of every description" offering these items, as well as "a general assortment of Inlaying, &c." to cabinetmakers in the country.³¹ Only one similar invitation to exporters has been found in the advertisements of other southern urban cabinetmakers. On 21 May 1806, John Sandford, a carver and gilder in Charleston, informed Charleston merchants that he had "been for some years past in New York and Philadelphia, working at ORNAMENTED GILT TABLES and CHAIRS, suitable for the Havana market. . . ."³²

In contrast with Baltimore, Alexandria's warehousing and economic histories more closely paralleled other southern urban centers. By the time that Samuel Ward, Alexandria's most prolific importer, was selling furniture at his warehouse on Prince Street, the city's importance as a seaport had already faded. The decline of Alexandria in the early nineteenth century has been attributed

to various factors such as the embargo of 1807, which ruined its wheat and tobacco trade with France and England, the surrender of the city to the British in 1814, and the failure of a canal project originally conceived as a link with Ohio.³³ Alexandria's cabinet-making trade, however, remained fairly strong. In 1796, the year that marked the last of Alexandria's boom years in the eighteenth century, there were ten cabinetmakers working in Alexandria. By 1816, the year cabinet warehousing became firmly entrenched in the port, there were eight cabinetmakers, two of which had also been working in 1796.³⁴

Although advertised warehousing in Alexandria began in 1816, apparently there was some furniture importation before that time. MESDA has recorded only two newspaper notices that mention it, however. The first was a 28 October 1784 advertisement in the *Virginia Journal and Alexandria Advertiser* offering "TWO Parian Marble Side Tables, curiously inlaid, and suitable for the most elegant room." Then, on 24 January 1804, John B. Taylor of the firm Coleman and Taylor of Baltimore, made the announcement in the *Alexandria Advertiser and Commercial Intelligencer* regarding the sale of Coleman and Taylor's plain and elegant furniture. Taylor was not successful in this venture; on 21 July of that year, his stock was offered at public sale.³⁵

Apparently unique to Alexandria was its warehousemen's advertisements of Portland, Maine, furniture imports. Alexandria probably was not the only southern city to which Portland furniture was sent. However, Alexandria's warehousemen and merchants were the only southerners known to have stated that they had Portland-made furniture for sale. On 21 May 1816, Edward Deeble announced in the *Alexandria Gazette, Commercial and Political* that he had "just received . . . from Portland, A new and elegant assortment of FURNITURE consisting of Side Boards, Secretary and Bookcase, Bureaus, Toilet and Card Tables, Bedsteads, Portable Desks, light Stands. . . ." Deeble was not a documented warehouseman. In 1805 he was apprenticed to Robert Gray, an Alexandria bookbinder, and in 1814, he advertised for journeymen bookbinders that were willing to emigrate to Lexington, Kentucky. Except for one shipment received by Nicholas Blasdell in 1818, Samuel Ward quickly cornered the market for Portland wares.³⁶ He placed approximately thirty-five advertisements in both the *Alexandria Herald* and the *Alexandria Gazette and Daily Advertiser* from 1816 to 1820, and most of these offered furniture from that port, particularly chairs.

On one occasion, Ward mentioned that he had received as many as 400 chairs from Portland.³⁷ Unfortunately, no Portland furniture with an Alexandria provenance has survived. This is curious, given the quantity of Portland pieces Ward claimed to have imported.³⁸ However, little is actually known about Portland cabinet and chairmaking prior to the late 1830s, when Edward Corey moved to Portland from Massachusetts and bought Nathaniel Ellsworth's furniture shop.³⁹ It is possible that most Portland furniture made before 1840, especially export items, merely has been attributed to other northern New England cities such as Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Although Ward's Portland furniture items appear to have dominated the warehousing advertisements from 1816 to 1820, he and Blasdell also sold other northern imports. In December 1816 Ward advertised that he had received elegant furniture from Boston; he also sold furniture imported from Salem, Massachusetts, Bath, Maine, and New York City at various times between 1816 and 1820.⁴⁰ In 1818 Nicholas Blasdell received Boston furniture from the schooner *Elizabeth Snow*.⁴¹ Other than John Taylor's attempt to retail his partnership's furniture, there were no other warehousemen advertising the sale of Baltimore furniture. However, apparently some Baltimore work was sent to Alexandria, for in the *Alexandria Herald* of 15 March 1820, auctioneer S. A. Marsteller announced that "3 doz windsor chairs (Baltimore make)" would be sold at his auction store later that week.

A study of Richmond's warehousemen is difficult. Unlike Baltimore and Alexandria, Richmond appears to have had only one identified cabinet warehouseman, George Hendree. This is not to say there were no furniture importers in Richmond. On the contrary, in the years immediately following the Revolution, a number of Richmond merchants advertised furniture they had imported from England. One of these importers, John Barret, prospered to the extent that he was elected mayor of Richmond on two occasions.⁴² Also, Richmond cabinetmaker John Alcock advertised twice in the early nineteenth century that he and other cabinetmakers were competing with New York imports. On 1 January 1809 he announced in the *Richmond Enquirer* that his mahogany furniture could be purchased "on low terms, as can be bought in New York." Nine years later, in a notice stating that he had begun business in his old store, Alcock advertised "a quantity of mahogany furniture," which he would "sell at

New-York prices, or ten percent lower than any made in Virginia.”⁴³ Other than the notices of nineteenth-century artisans attempting venture cargo sales in Richmond, however, the 1780s advertisements made by merchants and auctioneers were, for the most part, the only ones that mentioned imported furniture. Why this is so is not clear.

Richmond’s history could be one of the contributing factors to the small number of warehouse operators operating there. Although the area was settled as early as the mid-seventeenth century, the city was not surveyed until 1737. In 1780 it became the capital of Virginia, and in 1782 a charter of incorporation was passed by the general assembly. In 1790 its population was over 3,700; this figure jumped to over 5,700 in 1800 after an influx of immigrants from Scotland, Ireland, France, Spain, Germany and Holland. At this time Richmond was a significant manufacturing center, but by the time of the trade embargo of 1808-9, its flour-milling industry and its tobacco and other exports had begun to suffer. The city itself continued to grow, at least through annexation, and by 1810 its population approached 10,000. The War of 1812 also hindered Richmond’s export houses and industries, and the nationwide panic of 1819 left them in financial ruin. Business in Richmond remained poor through the 1830s.⁴⁴

Richmond’s late start and short growth period is echoed by the number of cabinet and seating-chairmakers working in the city at various times. In 1790 there were only five cabinetmakers and three chairmakers working in Richmond. By 1805 there were ten cabinetmakers and eight chairmakers, and in 1820 there were still ten cabinetmakers, but only six chairmakers. Advertisements by Richmond cabinetmakers after 1800 — and especially after 1810 — generally implied that the furniture they offered was made in Virginia. However, very few of these cabinetmakers actually stated outright that their furniture was made in Richmond.

Since Richmond is situated on the James River, its residents in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were provided with easy access to Lynchburg, Williamsburg, Norfolk, Portsmouth and Suffolk, and indirectly, Petersburg. Advertisements by Chester Sully, Thomas Crandall, George Hendree, J. and W. Cook, and Samuel Swann imply that some of their ready-made “Virginia” furniture was made in these cities. Sully operated a large cabinet-making concern in Norfolk, and he and George Hendree retailed furniture in Lynchburg and Richmond, as well as Edenton, North

Carolina. Hendree also advertised that he had received furniture from Philadelphia and New York, the only such notice published in Richmond by a Virginia cabinetmaker. Thomas Crandall lived and worked in both Lynchburg and Richmond. J. and W. Cook offered fancy furniture in Norfolk only a month before they began advertising in Richmond. In Samuel Swanns's notice that he was leaving the cabinetmaking business, he indicated that he had at least operated a concern in Petersburg when he stated "that in future the business in this city will be carried on by Mr. George Taylor, and in Petersburg by Mr. Ellis." James Taylor, another Richmond cabinetmaker, bought property in Petersburg from John DeJernatt, a cabinetmaker of that city, who in turn owned a cabinet shop in Richmond.⁴⁵

The interpretation of newspaper advertisements, especially their implications, can be risky, for they represent business propaganda and as such are not always likely to be completely truthful. It is certainly within the realm of possibility that all of the above, even Sully, either made some furniture in Richmond or at least employed journeymen there for that purpose. However, although there is Neoclassical furniture attributable to Richmond, the surviving body of this work is small, possibly indicating that much of the large quantity of furniture sold at auction in Richmond may not all have been of Richmond make.⁴⁶ Hendree in particular advertised the public sales of expensive furniture: \$8,000 worth in 1817, \$10,000 worth in 1818, and \$5- 6,000 worth in 1819, but he also stated that all but the 1817 furniture was of Richmond make. Another indication that Norfolk furniture was sold in Richmond may be found in James Woodward's notice that he was auctioning his furniture; in the advertisement he identified himself as a "Cabinet-maker, from Norfolk."⁴⁷ It apparently was his only notice.

One other interesting sidelight that emerges with the study of the advertisements of Richmond cabinetmakers is a Richmond-Charleston connection. Cabinetmaker and warehouseman Robert Walker of Charleston purchased a slave from John Alcock in 1808. In that year Alcock advertised that he had for sale a large quantity of furniture hardware, items also sold by Walker and Charles Watts all over the east coast. Alcock was not mentioned in the Watts account books, but it is possible that he and Walker worked out a trade. Walker was absent from Charleston records in 1808, an unusual occurrence for someone whose name appeared in more than one Charleston record or newspaper notice each year from

1799 to 1832 with the exception of that year; he may have been on a buying or selling trip. In 1811 Alcock offered cash for South Carolina bank notes, so he evidently was planning to purchase some commodity in South Carolina at that time as well. Unfortunately, with so little information, no definite statement can be made about Alcock's and Walker's connections. Alcock cannot positively be identified as a cabinet warehousemen, although in 1806, he advertised that he had received "a large assortment of Windsor Chairs and Settees, made in the newest fashion and by the best workmen in the state."⁴⁸ However, it is not totally inconceivable that he might have been selling Walker's products or that Walker may have sold his.

Richmond did have its share of venturers, beginning in 1806 with William Haight's announcement that he had on hand "a large and fashionable assortment of MAHOGANY FURNITURE, made by the best and most approved workmen in New-York." Haight was listed in the 1805 and 1806 New York City directories as an upholsterer at 24 Nassau Street. He advertised in Richmond several times in 1807, but by February 1808 he had left Richmond, and the entire stock of furniture in his warehouse was sold at public auction.⁴⁹ In December 1816, John L. Everitt of 60 Beekman Street in New York, announced that he was selling his furniture in Richmond. A month later his inventory was auctioned. Everitt also tried selling his furniture in Charleston through an agent.⁵⁰ In March 1817 Alexander Marcot, another Beekman Street cabinetmaker listed in New York City directories from 1808 to 1819, announced that he was opening a "Ware Room" in Richmond, where "a general and elegant collection of furniture" was available. In April and May of that year, Marcot's furniture, valued at \$3,500, was advertised as goods to be sold at public vendue. In October 1818 Marcot again tried selling his products, and again they were consigned to the auction block.⁵¹ It appears that selling venture cargo was not always profitable in Richmond, particularly for the venturers who tried selling their furniture there without an agent. The absence of any cabinet warehousemen other than those who sold furniture from other Virginia cities suggests that the warehousing branch of the cabinetmaking trade was not a lucrative business in Richmond.

Petersburg's cabinet warehousing history was slightly stronger than Richmond's, for the former definitely boasted two cabinet warehousemen. In 1812 cabinetmaker George Mason announced

in the Petersburg *Republican* that he had “just received Fourteen Dozen very elegant and well made FANCY AND WINDSOR CHAIRS.” Mason’s earlier advertisements indicate that he made furniture of his own as well. Three years later, William H. Russell, also a cabinetmaker, advertised “*Sixteen Dozen Elegant Fancy and Windsor Chairs MADE in the state of New-York.*” Another of his advertisements that year stated that he would sell his imported chairs at New York retail prices.⁵² No other Petersburg newspaper notices are known that identify the sources of furniture imported there, other than English furniture sold at auction. Similarly, no record of venture furniture has been found for Petersburg.

Although Mason and Russell were the only cabinet warehousemen who were advertising as such, a number of nineteenth-century Petersburg cabinetmakers, such as John DeJernatt, Leiper and Fenner, Henry Leiper, Roger Mallory, Robertson and Fore, and Raymond and Ventus, had sizable amounts of cabinet ware on hand or ready made in their “ware-rooms.” In a city the size of Petersburg, which had a population of less than 3,000 in 1790,⁵³ cabinetmakers advertising ready-made furniture very likely were offering imported wares. However, there was a trend toward such advertising in the nineteenth century. That such artisans did produce furniture is found in evidence such as the tools and unfinished furniture listed in Mason’s estate inventory and a notice in the *Petersburg Intelligencer* regarding the sale of Miller’s estate that describes his tools.⁵⁴

With its history as an import and export center from as early as the late seventeenth century, Norfolk should have been a prime location for cabinet warehousemen. During the eighteenth century, many coastal North Carolina farmers and tradesmen unwilling to negotiate the sandbars, shoals, and shallow waters of Carolina inlets exported products such as tar, pitch, cattle, pork, tobacco, and deerskins overland to Norfolk where ships bound to the West Indies awaited their lading. Ships from the West Indies also entered Norfolk with rum, molasses, and sugar; these goods commonly were exchanged for Virginia and North Carolina products. Norfolk merchants also traded with England, Scotland, and the northern colonies. Even though English and American troops burned Norfolk during the early days of the Revolution, overseas trade resumed in 1783. As the Virginia tobacco trade began to wane and wheat production increased, planters began shipping grain to New York and Pennsylvania to be milled, using

Norfolk as the site for transshipment. This northern trade was further stimulated by the growth of Richmond and Petersburg, whose merchants sent their grain down the James to Norfolk for shipment.⁵⁵ By the time of the War of 1812, there was healthy trade between Norfolk, Richmond, Petersburg, and the northern states, an environment ripe for aspiring cabinet warehousemen. Unfortunately, the small survival of Norfolk's nineteenth century newspapers hinders the examination of a cabinet warehousing trade in that city. Only a handful of imported furniture notices have been recorded, and not one extant advertisement by a cabinet warehouseman is known. A scrutiny of cabinet and seating-chairmaker's notices, however, has identified several tradesmen who probably warehoused northern and Virginia-made furniture.

There is no doubt that there was a fair amount of imported furniture in Norfolk. Examples of northern furniture, particularly from New York, with Norfolk histories have been found. As early as the 1750s northern chairs were brought or shipped to Norfolk. The 18 January 1754 inventory of the estate of merchant Robert Blaws listed "3 New England Chairs" valued at 2s. 6d.⁵⁶ In 1793 H. Richardson advertised Windsor chairs for sale; they had arrived aboard the sloops *Harrison* and *Greyhound* from Philadelphia. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, other pieces, along with chairs, were arriving in Norfolk. In 1802, John Hurley announced that he had imported architectural elements from the manufactory of George Andrews, offering them at New York prices, and "*Likewise*, a handsome Mahogany Bureau, 2 Card Tables, three pair of burnished pillar Frame Looking Glasses, for Cash." From 1812 to 1820, John Tunis advertised imported Windsor and fancy chairs, most of which were made in New York.⁵⁷

There may have been cabinet warehousemen in Norfolk as early as 1787. In November of that year, James McCormick, who had advertised in Alexandria and Baltimore in 1786, announced that he had "at present some *Ready made Furniture* of the newest taste." As in Petersburg, it is likely that a Norfolk cabinetmaker advertising finished furniture on hand actually was warehousing. McCormick later moved to Petersburg, where he died in 1791.⁵⁸ During the 1790s, there may have been at least two cabinet warehousemen in Norfolk, Abner Cox and Michael Murphy. In 1795 Cox advertised that he had "a *Capital assortment* of Ready made FURNITURE" at his shop; Murphy, who was listed in Philadelphia city directories from 1793 to 1797 and 1799 to 1800,

announced in 1799 that orders for his Windsor chairs could be left at his house or "at the store on the lower end of Campbell's Wharf." Given his listings in the Philadelphia directory at the same time that he was advertising in Norfolk, either alone or with a partner, it appears that during the early part of his residence in Norfolk, Murphy sold Philadelphia-made chairs. He eventually severed his ties with that city, for he died in Norfolk in 1804.⁵⁹

During the first two decades of the nineteenth century, there may have been as many as eight cabinet and chair warehousemen advertising in Norfolk, and there is evidence that suggests that at least one venturer located there as well. Lemuel Adams, Campbell and Johnson, Theodoric Bland, J. and W. Cook, and Lestrade and Bruce advertised furniture on hand in 1801, 1804, 1805, 1807, and 1818, respectively. The Cooks were itinerant tradesmen who advertised in Norfolk until September 1808; a month later they were in Richmond. Their 25 November 1807 advertisement offering "FANCY FURNITURE, Japanned and Gilt — viz. Cain Seat; Rush and Windsor Chairs; Recess Seats; Settees and Window Stools; Card, Pier, and Tea Tables; Work, Wash, and Candle Stands; Bedstead, Bed, and Window Cornice Likewise, Pictures framed and reguilt, and articles in the fancy line made to order. . . ." suggests that they were warehousing.⁶⁰ Joseph Lestrade was listed in the Philadelphia city directory in 1817, and on 24 October of that year he and William Bruce advertised in the Norfolk *American Beacon and Commercial Diary* that they had "*constantly on hand a supply of FURNITURE.*" Lestrade may have been a venturer, for in 1819 he had "removed from Norfolk," but had authorized F. D. Latour "to dispose of a few articles of NEW FURNITURE."⁶¹

Also among the possible and probable Norfolk cabinet warehousemen were the "carvers and gilders" who, in most instances simply retailed prints, frames, and looking glasses. One such artisan even sold chairs. In June 1801 William Morgan, who described himself as a "carver and gilder," announced that he had lately received "A few fashionable Rush bottom Chairs, suitable for Chambers or Country Seats." Morgan may have warehoused in Richmond and Petersburg as well, for in October 1801 he informed his customers that he had gone to those cities for five or six weeks.⁶² Other looking glass and print importers advertising in Norfolk were Joseph Marzorati (1805-6), Cipriane Parlasca (1807-9), and Abraham DeRevere (1816-20). Marzorati and Parlasca both were itinerant. Marzorati had concerns in

Baltimore, Savannah, and Charleston during 1805-17, and Parlasca advertised in Richmond, Raleigh, and New Bern between 1807-11.

William Ford, a New York city cabinetmaker, carpenter, looking glass frame maker, and Venetian blind maker, may have been engaged in the venture trade in Norfolk. He was listed in the 1800 and 1802-6 New York city directories, but in 1801 his name was absent from them. However, a William Ford, "cabinet maker" was listed at 2 Willock's Wharf in the Norfolk city directory. That listing is the only Norfolk record of Ford, who may have been trying to sell his New York made furniture in Norfolk. The wharf address suggests venturing, for not many urban southern artisans were listed at wharf addresses in directories and advertisements unless they were retailing imported furniture.

Several Norfolk artisans warehoused their furniture in other towns in Virginia and North Carolina. Chester Sully, solely and in partnership with George Hendree, advertised in Richmond from 1814 to 1818 and Lynchburg in 1814. He had previously advertised in Edenton, North Carolina, in 1811. The profusion of land transactions and advertisements bearing Sully's name indicates that he plied his trade mostly in Norfolk. Any sojourn in the other cities where he advertised probably was for the purpose of selling Norfolk-made furniture. Another Norfolk artisan presumably venturing his own furniture was James Woodward, who appears to have been Norfolk's most prominent cabinet-maker. In July 1813, the following notice appeared in three Richmond newspapers:

Fashionable and Elegant FURNITURE FOR SALE, At the Globe Tavern, by James Woodward, Cabinet-maker, from Norfolk. The Ladies and Gentlemen of Richmond are respectfully informed that such of the following articles as remain unsold, will on Thursday, the 29th inst. at 10 o'clock, be sold, at auction, without reserve . . . Sideboards, of the most fashionable kind; Secretary and Book Cases, Wardrobes, Ladies' Secretary Bureaus, Chests of Drawers, Cabinets and Work Tables, Tea Tables, Card Tables, Candle Stands, Portable Desks, Wash Stands, elegant carved and plain Mahogany Bedsteads, and Bedetts.⁶³

James Woodward's advertisements imply that he was a cabinet

warehousemen in Norfolk as well, possibly as early as 1795. In January 1795 Woodward announced that he had "launched into a more extensive line than formerly; and has procured at considerable expense, the best Workmen from *Philadelphia and New York*, and from *Europe*, which will enable him always to have on hand A great variety of elegantly finished Cabinet Work."⁶⁴ Following that statement was a list of the types of cabinet work that he had in his shop. It can be inferred from this advertisement that Woodward may have retailed some imported work as well. Although there was a large pool of itinerant journeymen traveling in the North and South, it is possible that not all of the cabinetmakers who claimed to have employed them actually did. Instead they may have "procured" certain types or parts of furniture from northern colleagues. There are few records of peripatetic cabinetmakers in Norfolk who were not venturers, but on the whole there are not many of the kinds of Norfolk documents such as city directories that would list journeymen. Further research on this subject is necessary.

Two notices published in Norfolk newspapers in 1814 and 1819 list a number of pieces of ready-made furniture to be sold at auction at the store "opposite Jas. Woodward's" and may signify his unsuccessful attempts to retail imported items. By 1820 Woodward definitely was warehousing, for John Tunis, the importer of New York goods mentioned previously, offered "a very large and elegant assortment" of fancy chairs for sale "at the Ware-Room of Mr. James Woodard, Main-Street."⁶⁵ Whatever Woodward's involvement in the Norfolk warehousing trade, it should be emphasized that there is also evidence that he continued to operate as a cabinetmaker. In 1820 Humerston Skipwith of Mecklenburg County, Virginia, purchased furniture from Woodward. The bill of sale for that purchase included a "Set of Pillow [pillar] & Claw dinning tables," a description that corresponds with a table made by James Woodward now in the MESDA collection.⁶⁶ Also, Woodward's estate inventory taken in 1839 listed unfinished furniture and cabinetmaking tools in his shop.⁶⁷

The lack of a dominant urban center on the North Carolina coast in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and a scarcity of surviving Edenton, New Bern, Fayetteville, and Wilmington newspapers are factors that hinder somewhat the study of warehousing in those cities.⁶⁸ However, there was no shortage of imported furniture in any of the North Carolina ports. In

Edenton, "Elegant Cabinet Work" was advertised for sale by "C. W. JANSON, From Boston" in 1796. G. N. Phillips offered "one dozen mahogany chairs, of the newest fashion made in New-York" and other furniture in 1797. Norfolk cabinetmakers Chester Sully and George Hendree sold venture furniture there in 1811, and in 1818 Cheshire and Cox offered Windsor chairs, dining tables, and looking glasses among other dry goods imported from New York.⁶⁹ There is also a letter from Joseph Kissam of New York to James Iredell of Edenton dated 20 March 1815 describing furniture Kissam had ordered for Iredell, along with bills for furniture received from New York city cabinetmakers John L. Everitt, Michael Allison, William Oldershaw, and Alexander Patterson.⁷⁰

New Bern newspapers published advertisements offering Philadelphia Windsor chairs in 1819 and "Bureaus, Tables, Ladies Work Stands, Candle do., Field Bedsteads, Windsor Chairs &c." from New York in 1820.⁷¹ A 21 November 1812 notice appeared in the New Bern *Carolina Federal Republican* for 27 March 1813, stating that the partnership of Ringgold and Bradley had "just received from New York per sch'r John Jones, Capt. Gould, a large supply of GROCERY GOODS, and Northern Produce . . . Also, a quantity of elegant MAHOGANY FURNITURE." It is possible that the Ringgold of this notice was Benjamin Ringgold, a cabinetmaker and grocer working in Baltimore from 1812 to 1817, in which case he would have been New Bern's earliest and perhaps only venturer. On 30 April 1818, William Turner of Fayetteville announced that he had "just received from the city of New York, a large and Elegant Assortment of CABINET FURNITURE," which he then proceeded to list.⁷² Turner's advertisement is the only known notice that lists furniture imported to Fayetteville. However, there is other evidence of northern furniture arriving in Fayetteville, including examples of the furniture itself and records of wharfage fees.

Imported furniture arrived in Wilmington from several northern cities. On 26 October 1788 Christopher Ellery advertised that he had "Just Imported in the Brig RECOVERY. . . NEW-ENGLAND RUM, Brown and Loaf Sugar, Coarse Salt, Chocolate, Flax, Bar Iron, Maple Desks, Cheese, Oats and Hay, White Pine clear Boards, Onions, and a few articles of DRY GOODS."⁷³ The Recovery had sailed from Rhode Island. In the *Wilmington Gazette* for 15 October 1805, "A VARIETY OF PHILADELPHIA FURNITURE" received from the brig Esparanta

was offered for sale at auction. In January 1807 "Gautier & Co." announced that they had "established a regular Packet, to ply between Newbury-Port, Boston and this place, they will generally have for sale almost every article furnished by the Eastern States . . . Furniture, White Pine Boards, Oil, Paints. . . ." A little under a month later they advertised that they had just received "Full setts Dining Tables, Single do. do., High Post Bedsteads, Chairs, different kinds, Side Boards, Secretarys, Bureaus."⁷⁴ A dozen Philadelphia chairs were offered for sale "under the direction of Robert W. Brown" in 1809, and on 4 November 1820, John A. Taylor, a saddler, harness and trunk maker, announced that he had received "a few Dozen Fancy and Windsor Chairs" from New York "all of which will be sold low. . . ."⁷⁵

Existing examples of northern-made furniture with strong coastal North Carolina histories are evidence of a strong import furniture trade. Several coastal North Carolina cabinetmakers' advertisements chafing at the great numbers of imports arriving in their area are also indications of the inroads the imported furniture made on the coastal North Carolina cabinet trade. The most notable of these was Benjamin Gillet's 1816 notice in a Wilmington newspaper stating vehemently that his furniture "could not fail of being preferred to the trash that is shipped here to be sold at auction."⁷⁶ Despite the market for imports, few coastal North Carolina cabinetmakers advertising in the newspapers of the four ports seem to have forayed into the cabinet warehouse business. Those that did apparently waited until after 1820 to try their hands at this new branch of the business. There were five potential warehousing concerns in three of the four North Carolina coastal cities before 1820; there do not appear to have been any warehousemen in Edenton other than Sully and Hendree.⁷⁷

In New Bern two possible warehousemen advertised. On 9 February 1809 Cipriane Parlasca, "carver and gilder," advertised in the New Bern *Carolina Federal Republican* that he had scientific instruments, prints, and looking glasses for sale in addition to "Gilding in its various branches executed with neatness." Parlasca was a peripatetic tradesman, advertising in Norfolk and Richmond in 1807, again in Norfolk in 1810 and 1811, as well as Raleigh in 1810 and 1811. The other was Gabriel Manigault Rains, originally of Charleston, who owned property in New Bern as early as 1797. In April 1816 Rains informed "the inhabitants of Newbern, and the adjacent cities" that he had a "a handsome assortment of furniture on hand," that included "Side

Boards, Dining Tables in setts, Breakfast do., Tea do., Card do., high Posts Mahogany Bedsteads, Field Post do. Candle Stands, Portable Desks, Black Walnut Dining Tables, Breakfast do. and sundry other articles too numerous to mention. . . .”⁷⁸ Although the walnut tables probably were not northern, the other furniture listed most likely was imported. Other information about Rains suggests that he was quite versatile. He not only made and retailed furniture, he also provided upholstering services, acted as an undertaker, managed a graveyard, and leased resort property in Beaufort, North Carolina.

Fayetteville was the site of the earliest documentable ware rooms in coastal North Carolina. Thomas and James Beggs, riding chairmakers of that city, advertised in 1793 that they had ready-made Windsor chairs on hand in their shop. Thomas Beggs advertised in Savannah as a blacksmith in 1794, and his notices as well as other records reveal that he probably only practiced that trade and sold dry goods there. One other Fayetteville cabinetmaker may have warehoused before 1820; John W. Baker advertised his “CABINET WAREHOUSE” on Bow Street where “orders in his line [would] be neatly executed” and “sundry articles of Furniture” were on hand.⁷⁹ In 1823 Baker consigned his work to Anthony Horton of Hillsborough and opened a “Cabinet Ware Room” in Salisbury.

In the *Wilmington Gazette* for 3 February 1803, “G. Bianche & Co., Carvers, Gilders, Picture Frame Makers & Print Sellers, Barometer & Thermometer Manufacturers, FROM LONDON,” advertised prints, drawing books, and “a great variety of borders, medallions, shells . . . patterns for fire screens, Italian vellum for drawing, &c.” It is not known if this was Bianche and Company’s only advertisement, for many issues of Wilmington newspapers are missing, and it cannot be determined whether they definitely were warehousemen. The nature of their advertisement and the terms in which they described themselves, however, suggest that they probably imported looking glasses and picture frames. It appears that they had left the area by 1809, for in that year “George Bianki,” was listed as a “Band-box maker” at 10 Queen Street in the Charleston city directory.

After 1820 the cabinet warehousing business expanded somewhat in New Bern, Fayetteville, and Wilmington. In New Bern, Richard Oliver and John W. Nelson both advertised ready-made furniture in 1822; Booth and Porters had a large stock of furniture on hand at “their Cabinet Furniture Establishment”

in 1835. In the following year John McDonald announced that he had purchased the stock of Booth and Porters, listing a number of pieces he had on hand. In 1840 Salmon S. Backus noted that he had "opened a Cabinet Warehouse three doors South of the State Bank" where he would "keep constantly on hand an elegant assortment of Fancy and Windsor Chairs, Looking Glasses." In Fayetteville, Duncan McNeill, who had taken John W. Baker as an apprentice in 1812, advertised in 1835 that he had mahogany and walnut furniture on hand for sale. In Wilmington, there were several newspaper notices in the 1830s that mention furniture warehouses, but these appear to have been the advertisements of merchants or northern agents only.⁸⁰

Charleston's warehousing history contrasts strongly with those of both Virginia and North Carolina. Many of Charleston's nineteenth century cabinetmakers had added the retailing of imported furniture to their repertoires by 1820, even though it took some time for warehousing to become popular in that city. Following the lead of fashionable cabinetmakers Jacob Sass and Robert Walker, most of the nineteenth century Charleston cabinetmakers were operating warerooms by 1815.

Imported furniture was in high demand in Charleston from the time it was settled in 1680. Many advertisements for and examples of imported furniture being used and sold in Charleston from 1732 to 1820 have been recorded. This market for imported furniture brought several venturers from the North to Charleston between 1783 and 1805. Andrew Gifford, a New York cabinetmaker, William Cocks, a Philadelphia cabinetmaker, Bankson and Lawson, Baltimore cabinetmakers and warehousemen, and James and George Smith, a Baltimore carving partnership, all tried venture warehousing in the late eighteenth century; apparently none met with any success.⁸¹ Hugh and John Finlay fared no better in the early nineteenth century. Their Charleston newspaper notices ran only two months in 1803, the last stating that they would be "leaving the state in a few days."⁸² These early northern venturers may have been premature in their attempt to market their goods in Charleston. Had they arrived in Charleston midway through the second decade of the nineteenth century, they might have prospered. As it was, they could not compete with either the cabinetwork produced by Charleston artisans at that time or the British and American imports available through merchants.

From 1800 to 1810, prominent Charleston cabinetmakers such as Sass, Walker, and Charles Watts, upholsterers John Francis

Delorme and Thomas Oliphant, and carver James W. Cotten experimented with the sale of imported goods along with their own Charleston-made products.⁸³ Some may have prospered in their endeavors, but most did not. The years 1805-10 were difficult for Charleston artisans. Many gave up their businesses, left the city, or experienced financial difficulties.⁸⁴ The economic factors that affected other regions of the South, particularly the British and French blockades of 1806, Jefferson's embargo of December 1807, and the non-intercourse act of 1809, had a devastating effect on Charleston's trade and commerce. These factors were at the root of the financial straits in which Charleston cabinetmakers found themselves. Importation of mahogany from the West Indies and other foreign ports to Charleston was curtailed, and any of that material used by the cabinetmakers had to be shipped from New York.⁸⁵ In a letter dated 24 March 1806 to cabinetmaker Jacob Henry in Beaufort, North Carolina, Jacob Cardoza, a Charleston cabinetmaker, described the beginning of the economic woes:

. . . I finished a pair of Card Tables- and have on hand- Two straight front side boards- one large & one small, which I can proceed on as far as making the drawers and then must put aside untill the arrival of the Veneers- as for purchasing Veneers here it will not answer independent of the reluctance of the cabinetmakers to sell- if they could be got. The price of them would far exceed the advantages which we could derive from their use . . . I have had a few articles to repair- the amount of which is trifling- I have been necessitated to borrow money to purchase articles of a trifling nature- the price of which is exorbitant particularly glue.⁸⁶

The transition in South Carolina's agrarian economy from rice and indigo to cotton also had an indirect effect on the prosperity of Charleston artisans. As a cotton agronomy began to develop in the South Carolina backcountry, planters moved inland. Large plantations, each with its own slave population, became the major economic units throughout South Carolina, functioning as independent communities. Small farmers and artisans whose finances and abilities did not lend themselves to such conditions migrated to the west. Although the effects of the growth of cotton mostly were felt in the South Carolina backcountry by artisans

in the more rural areas, Charleston's cabinetmaking community did not go unscathed. The shift of economic power away from Charleston meant less dependence on the city as an economic and social center. The Charleston cabinetmakers that did not leave the state, become planters, or declare bankruptcy, were those with an established clientele who found that cabinet warehousing was a profitable supplement to their trade. During the 1808 embargo, Charleston's direct trade shifted from Europe to the northern states under the direction of northern agents.⁸⁷ This new pattern of trade brought the North to the forefront as a source of household goods, and the "Northern Warehouse" was born in Charleston.

Philadelphia was Charleston's earliest source of warehoused goods. Jacob Sass and his son, Edward G., offered Philadelphia chairs and settees as early as 1811. On 29 July 1815, the younger Sass along with Andrew P. Gready began advertising the sale of Philadelphia imports at their "Northern Warehouse." Windsor and fancy chairs appear to have been the most popular furniture items imported. From 8 March 1816 to 17 July 1817 Claude N. Samory, a grocer, upholsterer, and importer advertised Philadelphia Windsor and fancy chairs, settees, and cradles in the Charleston *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser*. In 1818 John Gros, a Charleston cabinetmaker who had learned the trade from Jacob Sass, began his sale of Philadelphia Windsor chairs.⁸⁸ The United States Bureau of Customs *Outward Manifests* indicate that Philadelphia-made furniture was being sold in Charleston through at least 1840. During 1820-40, 5,887 individual pieces of cabinetware were exported to Charleston from Philadelphia; this was the highest number of individual pieces shipped anywhere from that city.⁸⁹

New York was another of Charleston's advertised sources of imported cabinetware, for after 1815 New York city emerged as the industrial center of the United States. In regard to the manufacture of furniture, it was the primary port to which mahogany was shipped, and the city supported a large and diverse cabinetmaking trade. The shop of Duncan Phyfe is legendary for its prolific output and elegant detailing, even to the extent that much of New York's best late Neoclassical furniture is attributed to Phyfe. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that wealthy Charlestonians were familiar with that shop. In a letter of 24 July 1815, John Wells, a New York attorney, wrote Sarah Elliott Huger of that "The tables you will get best at Phyfe's than elsewhere & I wish you therefore to give him the preference."⁹⁰ Sarah Huger,

also a New York resident, wrote Mrs. Harriott Horry of Tradd Street in Charleston a year later: “. . . the Tables are not yet paid for, Phyfe promises me to send the account the first leisure ten minutes he can snatch from his numerous customers. . . .”⁹¹ Interestingly, only a few New York venturers worked in Charleston. Of these, the partnership of Barzilia Deming and Erastus Bulkley was the most successful, operating from 1820 to 1841. Deming appears to have been the cabinetmaker of the partnership; he evidently practiced the trade in New York while Bulkley acted as the firm’s agent in Charleston. A card table (MESDA Research File 8866) labelled by the firm is still extant.

A study of Charleston newspapers of the 1815-22 period also revealed a few merchants advertising the sale of Boston-made furniture. Like most of the New York imports, the retail of these items apparently was carried out only by merchants; no evidence of any Charleston warehousemen importing Boston furniture or any Boston artisans selling their wares in Charleston has been found other than William Bittle’s notices that he had imported looking glasses for sale. Bittle was a Boston carver and gilder who advertised with Peter Fiche in Charleston from 1816 to 1818.⁹²

The same research also revealed a southern warehousing phenomenon apparently unique to Charleston and Savannah: the advertisement of Providence, Rhode Island, furniture in those cities. Rhode Island furniture was shipped to many southern ports; however, it was only in Charleston and Savannah that newspapers notices actually stated that Providence was the source of some of that furniture. In Savannah, the Providence products were part of a general assortment of imported furniture sold by Savannah warehousemen Richmond and Allen, but in Charleston the warehousing was done under the auspices of an actual Providence cabinetmaker. William R. Rawson, a member of a prominent family of cabinetmakers that worked in Providence from 1740 until the mid-1880s, began advertising in Charleston newspapers on 27 December 1816. He offered “Sideboards, Grecian Breakfast Tables, Persian Sofas, Persian Tea and Card Tables, Bedsteads, Chairs &c. &c. &c. *All very superior.*”⁹³ A sideboard (MRF 13,421) with Rawson’s label bearing a Charleston address has survived; it was thought initially that the piece was made in Charleston, but further study led to the conclusion that it was a Providence-made sideboard. Rawson advertised in Charleston newspapers until 1820, when he lost part of his warehouse to a fire that badly damaged some of his furniture. He then returned to Providence,

where he died in 1835.⁹⁴

It is difficult to measure the success of warehousing in Charleston. By 1828 imports from New York were threatening Charleston's artisan community in general, for on 4 March of that year a letter appeared in the *Charleston City Gazette* that implored Charlestonians to support their local mechanics; it began: "It is to us a matter of astonishment, that such an apathy should pervade in our community against the encouragement of mechanics generally. Persons frequently send to the North for what they could get at home."⁹⁵ In regard to cabinetmakers, a wealth of notices usually suggests that the advertisers were not prospering, for if they had a sufficient number of customers there was little need to advertise. However, Deming and Bulkley advertised frequently, and the longevity of their Charleston concern indicates that their business flourished. Both of the Sasses, Charles Watts, and Robert Walker died wealthy men, but all of them garnered income from other means such as real estate speculation. Therefore, it is difficult to determine how much of their affluence was related to warehousing.

One indication that the warehousemen were serious competitors in the local trade is the number of advertisements in Charleston newspapers that emphasized the sale of furniture made in Charleston. Joshua Neville, Alexander Calder, Richard Gouldsmith, John Watson's widow, Mary, Jacob Sass, and Robert Walker all offered Charleston-made cabinetware for sale at least once between 1808 and 1820.⁹⁶ The language of their notices was not as vehement as that of Wilmington cabinetmaker Benjamin Gillett. Nevertheless, the fact that they felt it necessary to inform potential customers that their work was made locally suggests that they experienced the press of competition from northern imports. On several occasions, this Charleston-made furniture was advertised as part of public sales. Apparently the cabinetmakers either were making room in their warehouses for imports or giving up the cabinetmaking business altogether.⁹⁷ In all, it would seem that warehousing in Charleston was most profitable when it was combined with cabinetmaking.

Savannah apparently was a haven for warehousemen, northern cabinetmakers seeking a new market, and venturers. Between 1798 and 1820, more than thirty cabinet warehousing concerns advertised in Savannah newspapers. Most of them were established by relocated artisans, many from New York. The sizeable number of these firms may appear strange for a port whose population

at the beginning of the nineteenth century was only 5,146 — compared with Baltimore's 26,514 and Charleston's 16,000 — but the pattern of commerce in Savannah from before the Revolution to 1820 supports the figure. From the time the town was settled, Savannah's residents relied on imports for their household goods. For example, only sixteen artisans associated with furniture production were working in Savannah between 1710 and 1767, and only three in 1767. However, in a two year period, 1765-67, 323 vessels cleared the port, bringing in a box of household furniture, a barrel of same, three entries, a parcel, a shipment, and 211 individual pieces of cabinet and chair work, most of it from New England.⁹⁸

Unlike Baltimore, whose early history is similar, Savannah did not emerge as a large, thriving urban center after the Revolution. Instead, its importance declined somewhat as the capital of the state was moved away. There were no large emigrations of artisans that could have established a significant cabinetmaking community, although a large number of vessels entered and cleared the port. Therefore, Savannah's inhabitants continued to import their fashionable furniture from the northern cabinetmaking centers. By the first decade of the nineteenth century, dominance of the northern furniture trade had shifted from New England to Philadelphia and New York. Savannah was one of the ports of call for vessels traveling from New York to the Caribbean, and this is evident in the number of New York cabinetmakers who advertised their wares in Savannah. Ten of these artisans have been recorded, and from ships' manifests Katharine Wood Gross has identified seven others who sent their furniture as venture cargo to Savannah between 1789 and 1815.⁹⁹ Venture cargo was arriving in Savannah after 1815 as well, evinced by newspaper notices such as that in the *Savannah Daily Republican* for 2 December 1820 indicating that Duncan Phyfe had consigned a cargo of his furniture to be sold at auction in Savannah by Calvin Baker.

Of the ten New Yorkers who advertised, five were selling New York furniture in Savannah before 1810, and five were not in the city until 1815. Most of them enjoyed long and prosperous careers in New York. Joseph Meeks, whose 1798 advertisement of "a handsome assortment of elegant MAHOGANY FURNITURE" was the earliest such notice in Savannah, was listed in the New York city directories from 1797 to 1820 and later. An 1833 advertisement which is said to have ushered in the furniture

styles of the early Victorian period probably was that of Meeks's son, for from 1816 to 1820, Joseph Meeks and Joseph Meeks, Jr., appeared in New York city directory listings.¹⁰⁰ Another member of the Meeks family, Edward C., offered New York furniture in his Savannah "Ware-Room" in 1801; in all probability he was son of the Edward Meeks identified in the New York city directories from 1797 to 1820 and later. John Hewitt, Jonas Payne, and Jacob Miller, the other individuals operating Savannah warehouses before 1810, also were frequently mentioned in New York city directories. The five cabinet and chairmakers who established warehouses from 1815 to 1820 were J. W. Morrell, William Barnes, J. Clarkson, William Macrae, and John H. Oldershaw. All but Morrell, who may have the son of New York cabinetmaker Jacob Morrell, were listed consistently in the New York city directories before 1820, and three of the five began warehousing in 1817.

Of the New Yorkers warehousing in Savannah, John Hewitt is probably the best-documented. A number of Hewitt's accounts and letters have survived, and the letters in particular offer a great deal of information regarding the Savannah warehousing trade in the first years of the nineteenth century. Although Hewitt sold his furniture in Savannah from 1800 to 1818, and perhaps later, his accounts and letters indicate that he only lived in Savannah from 1801 to 1805. He imported furniture from New York and New Jersey through his agent Matthew Bruen, but he apparently made furniture in Savannah as well, for he frequently wrote of purchasing mahogany and panelling. In one letter he stated: "I find the little profits, I get from you, is not worth me Running the risk of my life here, & bad Debts, if it was only the profits of the furniture, I should never be able to pay you, but what makes up I get some very good jobs here. . . ." He also sold other items such as cider, beer, and shoes, and he occasionally consigned cotton to Bruen for sale in New York.

Most interesting were Hewitt's descriptions of the furniture he received, the preferences of his customers, and his competition. Hewitt complained several times about damaged furniture: "I must get you to send me three sideboard tops for those Streat fronted sideboards that you sent last, for the tops are split from one end to the other, so that I cannot sell them." and "The furniture I rec'd by the New York was very much injured." One of his criticisms of the furniture he received was directed at the maker: "I would thank you to satisfy that fearfull man Alling

for the Chairs and Deduct for varnish and varnishing five Dollars that is what I have payd. I would of [sic] returned them on [his] hands if I had seen them before I Sail'd, for they are finished in a Shamefull manner, and as chargd more than Common and was not finished." Such remarks are more evidence that furniture made in New York for venture often was poorly constructed and finished. Alling could not be further identified. Hewitt also frequently requested that Bruen send him bedsteads, dining tables, and sideboards, for apparently they were his most popular items. In 1801 he stated: "I have a great call for Dining Tables, I have five Sett bespoke now and Depend in hopes that you have a quantity made." Hewitt apologized frequently for not being able to settle his accounts with Bruen as quickly as he would have liked, citing the fact that his furniture was ordered from others in New York. Apparently Edward C. Meeks was a successful competitor because of his family ties in New York: "[I] am very s[orry th]at I cannot Continue in the same w[ay] with you, for this reason Meeks can under Sell me, because [the Meeks family in New York] make [him] furniture . . ."¹⁰¹

Debts plagued Hewitt, despite a more stable market in 1803, forcing him to leave Savannah by 1805. However, he by no means severed his ties with the southern port. Hewitt and Benjamin Ansley had formed a copartnership in 1802, and they continued to warehouse in Savannah until the dissolution of their partnership in 1806. In 1807 Hewitt was in partnership with either Matthew or William Mandeville, and their furniture was advertised in Savannah in 1808. Hewitt's warehousing was adversely affected during the War of 1812, and he apparently did not send any furniture to Savannah until the treaty of peace was signed in 1815, when he began doing business with the firm of Gorham and Jacob Miller. In 1817 Hewitt hired William Scott to act as his Savannah agent. Scott contracted with George Faries and Jacob Miller, working as the firm Faries and Miller, to market Hewitt's furniture. Of Faries and Miller, Scott wrote: "I have got a job at Faries and Millers. . . . They get their furniture from one Clarkson in N Jersey- They talk about establishing a shop in N York next Summer and one of them to remain there, as they think they can then carry on Business to better advantage- They have got but very little furniture on hand at present they are complaining of Clarkson's not attending to their orders. . . ." After the panic of 1819 Hewitt gave up cabinetmaking in New York and warehousing in Savannah until the late 1820s.¹⁰² It is possible

that the Clarkson in Scott's letters was J. Clarkson, who announced in the Savannah *State Republican* for 1 January 1817 that he had recently received furniture from New York, describing himself as a cabinetmaker from that city. It is also possible that Hewitt's agent, William Scott, was related to Savannah cabinetmaker John Scott, who also warehoused.

Although the majority of Savannah's warehousemen were from New York originally, there were others who either arrived from cities such as Philadelphia and Providence or imported furniture from other northern locales. On 18 October 1798 Joseph B. Barry, the Philadelphia cabinetmaker, announced that he had received from Philadelphia

A most elegant assortment of bespoke warranted Mahogany Furniture, Among which are, SILLENDER DESKS, with bookcases, of various shapes and entirely new construction, Sattin hair cloth chairs and sofas to match, a few newly invented portable and folding chairs, Commodious side boards of the most fashionable stile, Setts of dining tables, compleat, on a plan not yet seen in this market, Card and Breakfast tables to match, Bureaus, plain and inlaid, circular and square, Travelling and portable desks, plain and bound with brass, elegantly finished and with secrets to secure papers. . . .

Later in the nineteenth century, Barry operated a warehouse in Baltimore. From December 1802 to January 1803, Baltimore cabinetmaker Edward Priestley advertised in Savannah that he had Baltimore furniture for sale. A 4 December 1802 notice in the Savannah *Georgia Republican and State Intelligencer* listed Priestley's address as "at Johnson & Robertson, & Co.'s old Compting hou[se]," and offered "Secretarys & Book-Cases, Side Boards, Circular and straight front Bureaus, Fall Desks, Circular and sash corner Card Tables, Oval Pembroke do. Northumberland dining do. circular and straight front Bason stands, Candle stands, &c. -ALSO- A few Fancy Chairs. . . ." Richmond and Allen, cabinetmakers and lumber merchants from Providence, proffered furniture from their Rhode Island shop as well as work from New York and Philadelphia from 1806 to 1810.¹⁰³ From 1815 to 1817, George G. Faries, in partnership with John Adams, sold Wilmington, Delaware, furniture in Savannah. Faries and Adams were in Wilmington during the same period, and there is evidence

that Faries was located in Wilmington at the time the partners were warehousing in Savannah. However, Faries was originally from Savannah, for he had been apprenticed Savannah cabinet-maker William Riggs.¹⁰⁴ He was the same George Faries who, in partnership with Jacob Miller, sold Hewitt's furniture in Savannah in 1817. There is also evidence that Elijah and Jacob Sanderson, cabinetmakers of Salem, Massachusetts, consigned thirty cases of furniture to be sold in Savannah by the captain of the brig *Harriott*. Charles Watts, the Charleston cabinetmaker, also apparently exported furniture to Savannah at an unknown date. A New Jersey chairmaker and several other Philadelphia cabinet and chairmakers that sent cargos of their furniture to Savannah for sale have been identified.¹⁰⁵

There were also several cabinet warehousemen who began their careers as cabinetmakers or chairmakers in Savannah. Faries was one; others were Nathaniel Brown, Moses Nichols, William Riggs, John Scott, Benjamin Ansley, Silas Cooper, Amasa Humphreys, and W. C. Orvis. Since Georgia documents other than newspaper notices are scarce, little is known about these warehousemen. When Benjamin Ansley and John Scott died, they both left estates valued at over \$3,000, evidence that they were successful. Riggs, however, constantly had trouble collecting his debts, and his shop was sold at auction in 1808 for failure to pay rent. Brown's estate was appraised at only \$141.87 1/2.¹⁰⁶

The advertisements of Savannah's warehousemen indicate that there was a market for all sorts of furniture, rather than simply Windsor and fancy chairs. Their notices were often long and detailed with many pieces listed and described. For example, on 12 December 1811 cabinet warehousemen J. and G. Carpenter announced in the *Columbian Museum and Savannah Advertiser* that they had opened "a Cabinet Furniture ware house . . . where they offer for sale on liberal terms for cash or produce: 2 elegant Sideboards, 1 sett large Dining Tables; 4 do. 3 1/2 feet do. do.; 1 Ladies work Table, 6 light stands; 10 Bureaus; 2 Secretaries, 11 Bedsteads, 11 portable writing Desks, 6 doz. chairs assorted." J. W. Morrell was even more explicit in his *Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger* notice of 2 May 1815:

Elegant Furniture Just opened from New York . . . consisting of the following articles: Sideboards, of the latest fashion, Pillar and claw card Tables do., do. do. tea do., Tea Tables, readed legs and Casters, 1 elegant large set

of folding dining Tables, 1 do. do. of strait legs and extra leaves, Escritorys, of the latest fashion, Lady's elegant work Tables, with marble tops, Lady's pillar and claw work Tables, with writing Desks, Lady's strait Legs and Casters, with writing Desks, Lady's elegant toilet Tables, with and without marble tops, 1 elegant sattin Ward Robe, with marble top and carved legs, Bason Stands, with folding tops, Plain Bason Stands, Piano Stools, covered with hair and morocco, Elegant mahogany Bedsteads, high posts and field do. with sacking bottoms complete, Portable writing Desks, Elegant Sofas, of the latest fashion, 1 elegant chair, covered with hair, with brass wheels for the purpose of invalids, Elegant fancy gilt Chairs. . .

John Hewitt's and John H. Oldershaw's advertisements were almost as lengthy.

Such a high volume of importers, venturers, warehousemen, and imported furniture suggests that warehousing was profitable in Savannah, despite Hewitt's complaints and Riggs's financial woes. Savannah's warehousing history is so strong that there hardly seems to have been much opportunity for the city's cabinetmakers to make a living without selling at least a few imported furniture forms. Benjamin Ansley and John Scott combined both cabinet-making and warehousing and apparently achieved success with this diversification.

When the histories of warehousing in each southern port are assembled, an interesting pattern of development is evident. Apparently there were certain demographic conditions that had to be met in order for cabinet warehousing to be a strong or prevalent branch of the South's cabinetmaking trade. Cabinet warehousemen selling northern furniture were most likely to achieve success in the southern states where a single port served as the primary urban center. However, that port could not be too large or too cosmopolitan, for a sizeable and prosperous population encouraged the growth of a strong cabinetmaking and furniture exporting trade. Under such conditions, there was no market for furniture imported from the North. For example, during the early nineteenth century Baltimore was so large that it supported a number of highly trained and specialized cabinetmakers who were able to sell their products fairly cheaply. The ports of Virginia and North Carolina, on the other hand, were smaller and far less

dominant as trade centers. They could not support more than a few importers other than those from other cities in their respective states, or, in the case of North Carolina, venturers from nearby states.

In actuality, Charleston and Savannah emerge as the only port cities where cabinet warehousing was a viable means of supplementing cabinetmakers' incomes, but for different reasons. Charleston reached its peak as an urban cabinetmaking center in the 1790s. As its economy and population declined in the nineteenth century, there was a drop in the number of cabinetmakers working there as well. Such conditions were not favorable for the growth of a trade that increasingly required more skilled, highly-trained workmen able to produce the finely finished and veneered pieces of Neoclassical furniture. The city's wealthy and fashion-conscious residents nevertheless demanded stylish furniture. Charleston cabinetmakers therefore resolved these circumstances by selling furniture imported from the urban centers of the North, particularly New York. Savannah, on the other hand, appears not to have developed much of a local cabinetmaking trade. From the time of its settlement, its citizens purchased imported household furniture, and there was little need for more than a handful of local cabinetmakers to ply their trade. Savannah was, however, a major port of call in the trade between New York and the Caribbean as well as New York and Liverpool, and its inhabitants also demanded fashionable American furniture. The result was the dominance of a furniture trade, based on importation that included cabinet warehousing. It appears, however, that regardless of whether the warehouser was in New Bern, Baltimore, or Savannah, he was most likely to profit by combining the sales of imported furniture with work from his own cabinet shop.

FOOTNOTES

1. Emory Q. Hawk, *Economic History of the South* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1934), 214-16, 230, 260-2.
2. Thomas P. Abernethy, *The South in the New Nation, 1789-1819* (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), 34-6.
3. Louis Martin Sears, *Jefferson and the Embargo* (New York: Octagon Books, 1966). This book covers the history of the embargo, its good and bad effects on the American economy, and the impact it had on New England, the Middle States, the South, and abroad.
4. William B. Hesseltine, *The South in American History*, 3rd. ed. (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1943), 164-6; Douglass C. North and Robert Paul Thomas, eds., *The Growth of the American Economy to 1860*, 2nd. ed. (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1968), 175-81.
5. Hawk, *Economic History*, 319-24.
6. Testamentary Proceedings, Maryland, vol. 3, 1668-69, 332; Deeds, Patents, etc., Westmoreland County, Virginia, 1665-77, 237a.
7. "Letters of William Byrd, First," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 26 (1918): 390-1.
8. *Charleston South-Carolina Gazette*, 5-12 August 1732. The *South-Carolina Gazette* had only been in circulation since January 1732.
9. Mabel Munson Swan, "Coastwise Cargoes of Venture Furniture," *Antiques* 55 (1949): 278.
10. *Charleston South Carolina Gazette*, 7 Apr. 1749; *Annapolis Maryland Gazette*, 4 Apr. 1754.
11. *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, 6 Sept. 1791.
12. *Charleston Courier*, 24 Mar. 1818; *Charleston Southern Patriot and Commercial Advertiser*, 29 Aug. 1817; *Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger*, 26 Apr. 1810; *Alexandria Herald*, 29 Sept. 1818.
13. Sherry H. Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 1, 25.
14. Rhoda M. Dorsey, "The Pattern of Baltimore Commerce during the Confederation Period," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 62 (June 1967): 119-20.
15. Olson, *Baltimore*, 26-30.
16. *Ibid.*, 10, 41, 46.
17. *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, 18 May 1784, 10 June, 29 July 1785, 6 Sept. 1791.
18. *Charleston Columbian Herald*, 1 May 1786; *Baltimore Daily Repository*, 17 Apr. 1792; *Federal Gazette and Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, 12 July 1813. A review of Baltimore cabinetmakers' advertisements for the period 1783-1820 revealed that most of them were lumber merchants.

19. *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, 14 May 1790, 29 Jan. 1796; *Maryland Gazette or Baltimore Advertiser*, 18 May 1790.
20. *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, 24 Mar. 1794; Edwards' *Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, 30 Aug. 1794.
21. *Easton Maryland Herald and Eastern Shore Intelligencer*, 5 July 1796; *Baltimore Republican or Anti-Democrat*, 1 Jan. 1802; *Federal Gazette and Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, 26 May 1802.
22. *Annapolis Maryland Gazette*, 6 July 1769; *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, 30 Oct. 1787.
23. Swan, "Venture," 278.
24. *Augusta Chronicle and Georgia Gazette*, 18 Oct. 1798; *Federal Gazette and Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, 5 Feb., 5 and 22 Apr., 1 and 12 July 1803; *Baltimore Telegraph and Daily Advertiser*, 12 May 1803.
25. *Baltimore Republican or Anti-Democrat*, 15 Apr. 1802; *Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 2 Oct. 1816; *Federal Gazette and Baltimore Advertiser*, 2 Oct. 1816, 19 Nov. 1818.
26. *Charleston City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 18 Mar., 6 May 1803.
27. *Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 13 May 1817.
28. *Georgia Republican and Savannah Intelligencer*, 15 Dec. 1802, advertisement is dated 4 Dec. 1802, 1 Jan. 1803; *Columbian Museum and Savannah Advertiser*, 14 Jan. 1803.
29. *Alexandria Advertiser and Commercial Intelligencer*, 24 Jan., 13 Apr. 1804; *Baltimore American Commercial and Daily Advertiser*, 5 May 1809, 12 Sept. 1810.
30. *New Bern Carolina Federal Republican*, 27 Mar. 1813.
31. *Baltimore American and Daily Advertiser*, 22 Nov. 1800.
32. *Charleston Times*, 21 May 1806.
33. Betty Harrington Macdonald, "The Port of Alexandria," in *Alexandria: A Composite History*, ed. Elizabeth Hambleton and Marian Van Landingham (Alexandria: Alexandria Bicentennial Commission, 1975), 48.
34. Ruth Lincoln Kaye, "Streets and Alleys of Old Alexandria," 1749-99, in *Composite History*, 29. The figures for 1796 and 1816 are based on what has been recorded in the MESDA Index of Artists and Artisans and only include those men who were identified as cabinetmakers. They do not include seating chairmakers, upholsterers, carvers, or turners unless those men were also cabinetmakers.
35. *Alexandria Advertiser and Commercial Intelligencer*, 21 July 1804.
36. Orphans Court Records, 1801-5, Alexandria County, Virginia, 324, 13 December 1805; *Federal Gazette and Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, 12 Aug. 1814; *Alexandria Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 15 Mar. 1819.
37. *Alexandria Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 15 March 1819.
38. 15 sideboards, 1,392 chairs, 80 bureaus, 12 secretaries, 24 bedsteads, 118 tables, 7 dressing tables, 21 portable desks, 11 sofas, 20 light stands, 10 wash stands, 150 looking glasses. These figures were computed from Ward's advertisements in the *Alexandria Herald* and *Alexandria Gazette and Daily Advertiser* from 1816-20; they do not include any furniture Ward did not

identify as either coming from Portland or off a schooner or brig arriving in Alexandria from Portland.

39. Patricia E. Kane, *300 Years of American Seating Furniture* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1976), 188-9; Dean A. Fales, Jr., *American Painted Furniture, 1660-1880* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1979), 203.
40. *Alexandria Herald*, 25 Dec. 1816; 7 Nov. 1817; 6 Apr. 1818; 7 Apr. 1819; *Alexandria Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 17 Nov. 1818.
41. *Alexandria Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 16 June 1818.
42. Richmond Common Council Records, no. 1, 1782-93, 239; no. 2, 1793-1806, 20.
43. *Virginia Patriot and Richmond Daily and Mercantile Advertiser*, 4 Mar. 1817; *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 4 Mar. 1817; *Richmond Enquirer*, 7 Mar. 1817.
44. Virginius Dabney, *Richmond: The Story of a City* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976), 13, 20, 31, 61-4, 75, 79, 102-3.
45. *Richmond Enquirer*, 9 July 1813, 17 Apr. 1818; *Norfolk Herald*, 3 June 1812; *Lynchburg Press*, 13 Apr., 3 Nov. 1814; *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 5 May 1817; *Edenton Gazette*, 25 June 1811; *Norfolk Gazette and Publick Ledger*, 25 Nov. 1807; *Richmond Virginia Argus*, 7 Oct. 1808; *Richmond Virginia Gazette and General Advertiser*, 1 June 1796; *Richmond Hustings Deeds*, No. 10, 1815-16, 612-24, 5 Feb. 1816; *Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia Records*, 73, 2397.
46. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 27 Oct. 1817, 14 Feb. 1818, 19 Feb. 1819.
47. *Richmond Daily Compiler*, 26 July 1813; *Richmond Enquirer*, 27 July 1813; *Richmond Virginia Patriot*, 27 July 1813.
48. *Charleston Times*, 11 Apr. 1810; *Richmond Virginia Argus*, 8 Nov. 1806; *Richmond Enquirer*, 13 June 1806, 16 July 1811.
49. *Richmond Virginia Argus*, 8 Nov. 1806, 6 May, 11 Nov. 1807, 1 Jan. 1808; *Richmond Enquirer*, 8 May, 31 Dec. 1807, 16 Feb. 1808.
50. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 28 Dec. 1816, 18 Jan. 1817; *Charleston Courier*, 28 Dec. 1818; *Charleston City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 29 Dec. 1818.
51. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 26 Mar., 7 Apr., 19 May 1817, 17 and 21 Oct. 1818.
52. *Petersburg Intelligencer*, 8 May 1810, 26 May, 22 Sept. 1815; *Petersburg Republican*, 3 August 1812. The advertisement in the 26 May 1815 *Petersburg Intelligencer* was dated 2 May 1815.
53. This population figure also included the towns of Blandford and Pocahontus in Prince George and Chesterfield counties, respectively. U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, *Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790: Virginia*, 1908, reprint (Spartanburg, S.C., 1974), 10.
54. *Petersburg Hustings Court Will Book* 2, 1806-27, 89-91, 13 Sept. 1813; *Petersburg Intelligencer*, 15 Mar. 1806.
55. Thomas J. Wertenbaker, *Norfolk: Historic Southern Port*, 1931, (rept. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1961), 30-7, 44, 74-6, 82-3.

56. Appraisements, No. 1, 1755-83, Norfolk County, 36; the inventory was recorded in 1760.
57. *Norfolk Virginia Chronicle*, 18 May 1793; *Norfolk Herald*, 18 Feb. 1802; *Norfolk Gazette and Publick Ledger*, 12 June 1812; *Norfolk American Beacon and Norfolk and Portsmouth Daily Advertiser*, 17 May 1820.
58. *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, 21 Feb. 1786; *Virginia Journal and Alexandria Advertiser*, 11 May 1786; *Norfolk and Portsmouth Journal*, 21 Nov. 1787; *Virginia Gazette and Petersburg Intelligencer*, 23 June 1791.
59. *Herald and Portsmouth and Norfolk Daily Advertiser*, 31 Jan. 1795; *Norfolk Herald*, 29 Oct. 1799; *Norfolk Epitome of the Times*, 21 Nov. 1799; Will Book No. 2, Norfolk County, 201, 26 Apr. 1804.
60. *Norfolk Gazette and Publick Ledger*, 25 Nov. 1807, 12 Sept. 1808; *Richmond Virginia Argus*, 7 Oct. 1808.
61. *American Beacon and Norfolk and Portsmouth Daily Advertiser*, 2 June 1819.
62. *Norfolk Herald*, 4 June, 27 Oct. 1801.
63. *Richmond Daily Compiler*, 26 July 1813; *Richmond Enquirer*, 27 July 1813; *Richmond Virginia Patriot*, 27 July 1813.
64. *Herald and Norfolk and Portsmouth Advertiser*, 28 Jan. 1795; *Norfolk American Gazette*, 21 Apr. 1795; advertisement is dated 27 Jan. 1795.
65. *Norfolk Gazette and Publick Ledger*, 11 June 1814; *American Beacon and Norfolk and Portsmouth Daily Advertiser*, 1 Mar. 1819, 17 May 1820.
66. The Skipwith family plantation was Prestwould in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. Humerston Skipwith lived with his mother, Lady Jean, at Prestwould after his wife died in 1823. Information courtesy of Mrs. Elizabeth Coles Langhorne.
67. Will Book 6, Norfolk City, 222, 4 Apr. 1839.
68. Information on coastal North Carolina's settlement patterns, its port cities and their furniture imports, as well as interpretation of its artisans' advertisements can be found in detail in John Bivins, Jr., *The Furniture of Coastal North Carolina, 1700-1820* (Winston-Salem, N.C.: Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, 1988), 3-112; hereafter cited as Bivins, *FCNC*.
69. *Edenton State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 24 Nov. 1796, 26 Jan. 1797; *Halifax North-Carolina Journal*, 5 Dec. 1796; *Edenton Gazette*, 13 Aug. 1811, 12 May, 1 Dec. 1818.
70. James Iredell, Jr., Papers, Charles E. Johnson Collection, Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Raleigh.
71. *New Bern Carolina Centinel*, 4 Dec. 1819, 18 Nov. 1820.
72. *Fayetteville Carolina Observer*, 30 Apr. 1818.
73. *Wilmington Centinel, and General Advertiser*, 26 Oct. 1788; *Wilmington Gazette*, 6 Jan., 3 Feb. 1807; *Wilmington True Republican, or American Whig*, 23 May 1809, advertisement dated 8 May 1809; *Wilmington Cape-Fear Recorder*, 4 Nov. 1820.
74. *Wilmington Gazette*, 6 Jan., 3 Feb. 1807.

75. Wilmington *True Republican, or American Whig*, 23 May 1809, advertisement is dated 8 May 1809; Wilmington *Cape-Fear Recorder*, 4 Nov. 1820.
76. Bivins, *FCNC*, 112.
77. Unless otherwise noted, the information about the North Carolina warehousemen was gleaned from Appendix I of Bivins, *FCNC*. Cabinetmakers listed in that appendix are arranged alphabetically by surname.
78. New Bern *Carolina Federal Republican*, 6 July 1816, advertisement is dated 6 April 1816.
79. Fayetteville *Carolina Observer*, 30 Apr. 1818.
80. *People's Press and Wilmington Advertiser*, 27 Nov. 1835, 17 Feb. 1837, 16 Mar. 1838.
81. Alfred Coxe Prime, comp., *The Arts and Crafts in Philadelphia, Maryland, and South Carolina, 1786-1800* (Philadelphia: Horace Walpole Society, 1932), 178-9; Rita Susswein Gottesman, comp., *The Arts and Crafts in New York, 1777-1799* (New York: New York Historical Society, 1954), 119; Charleston *Columbian Herald*, 1 May 1786; Charleston *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 23 Mar. 1797, 14 and 24 Sept. 1798.
82. Charleston *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 6 May 1803.
83. Charleston *Times*, 11 Nov. 1801, 8 May, 6 Dec. 1802, 29 July 1803; Charleston *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 3, 26 Aug. 1802; 8 Nov. 1804.
84. Charleston *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 4 July 1806, 8 Mar., 3 Sept. 1808; Land Records, Miscellaneous, Charleston County, Part 101, Bks. C8-D8, 1810-11, C8: 259-60; Elizabeth Heyward Jervey, comp., "Marriage and Death Notices from the City Gazette of Charleston, S.C.," *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 41 (1940): 132; Charleston County Wills, Vol. 32, 1807-8, 510; Charleston *Courier*, 22 Nov., 13 Dec. 1808.
85. Sears, *Jefferson*.
86. Jacob Henry Papers, 1806-39, Blotter Book and Loose Papers, Manuscripts Dept., Duke University, Durham.
87. George C. Rogers, "The Transition to the Nineteenth-Century Economy," *Perspectives in South Carolina History: the First 300 Years* (Columbia, SC.: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), 89-90, 92.
88. Charleston *Courier*, 2 Feb. 1811, 18 June 1818; Charleston *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 29 July 1815.
89. The next highest amount was 4,062 shipped to Suffolk, Virginia. Kathleen M. Catalano, "Cabinetmaking in Philadelphia, 1820-40," *Winterthur Portfolio* 13 (1979): 83.
90. "Four Letters of the Early Nineteenth Century," *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 43 (1942): 53.
91. Sarah E. Huger to Mrs. Harriott Horry, 5 Mar. 1816, Box 11-334, South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston.
92. Charleston *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 18, 22 Apr. 1815, 24 Aug., 1, 4 Nov. 1816, 3 Jan. 1817; Boston city directories, 1807-20; Charleston *Courier*, 24 Aug. 1816, 8 Jan. 1817.

93. Eleanore B. Monahan, "The Rawson Family of Cabinetmakers in Providence, Rhode Island," *Antiques*, 118 (July 1980): 134-47; *Charleston Courier*, 27 Dec. 1816.
94. *American Beacon and Norfolk and Portsmouth Daily Advertiser*, 3 Mar. 1820; *New Bern Carolina Centinel*, 11 Mar. 1820; Monahan, "Rawson Family," 134-47.
95. Ulrich B. Phillips, ed., *Plantation and Frontier, 1649-1863* (1910; reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1969), 2:354.
96. *Charleston Courier*, 22 Nov., 11 and 13 Dec. 1808, 25 Feb. 1813, 19 Oct. 1818, 20 Feb., 21 Nov. 1820, 7 and 21 Jan., 6 Feb. 1822.
97. For example, Calder's Charleston-made furniture was advertised for sale in 1808 and by 1813 he was a dry goods merchant. Watson's was being sold off because he was dead. After an auction of Sass's Charleston-made stock in 1818, he was not identified as a cabinetmaker again.
98. Katharine Wood Gross, "The Sources of Furniture Sold in Savannah, 1789-1815" (Master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1967), 1-14.
99. *Ibid.*, 132-40.
100. *Columbian Museum and Savannah Advertiser*, 9 Mar. 1798; Celia Jackson Otto, *American Furniture of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Viking Press, 1965), 114.
101. All of Hewitt's quotes were excerpted from photocopies of John Hewitt's letters to Matt Bruen, New York merchant, 1801-2. Courtesy, the Winterthur Library, The Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera.
102. Johnson, "Hewitt," 188, 191; *Columbian Museum and Savannah Advertiser*, 17 Aug. 1804, 2 Mar. 1806, 30 Dec. 1808.
103. Gross, "Sources," 39-40; *Savannah Public Intelligencer*, 31 Oct. 1806; *Columbian Museum and Savannah Advertiser*, 23 Apr. 1810.
104. Gross, "Sources," 26; *Savannah State Republican*, 2 Feb. 1817, 5 Aug. 1817; *Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger*, 5 Mar. 1808.
105. Gross, "Sources," 77, 132, 135-7, 139.
106. *Ibid.*, 20, 23, 46; *Savannah Public Intelligencer*, 19 and 21 Apr. 1808.

A Catalog of Northern Furniture with Southern Provenances

JOHN BIVINS

Beginning with the settlement of Jamestown in 1609, imported furniture has represented a component of southern household inventories, continuing with the advent of machine-made movables from Grand Rapids at the end of the last century. The actual proportion of imported furniture in use actually remained low in most areas until the end of the eighteenth century, and then began to grow substantially as the nineteenth century advanced. Several categories of imported furniture can be identified, including pieces moving from region to region with households, furniture ordered from outside artisans, and furniture purchased either from consignment merchants, warehousemen, or at vendue.

By the end of the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth century, the increasing emigration of second and third-generation southerners propelled by the desire to acquire their own plantations brought about the movement of household goods from one region to another, either by water or land. Water transportation afforded the ability to move pieces of furniture that could not be accommodated readily in wagons, so a family emigrating from the James River estuary of Virginia to the Albemarle Sound area of North Carolina, or even to a site along the Chowan or Roanoke rivers flowing to the sound, might expect to carry with them case pieces of substantial size. Movement into the interior, where land routes constituted the only means of conveyance, sharply limited the possibility of carrying household items much larger than chests and chairs.

Inventories, mortgages, and surviving furniture reveal that furniture importation by emigrating families largely was comprised of furniture made in the region of family origin. That is, a lower Chesapeake family moving to new land in Carolina

brought with them as much Virginia furniture as they found practical. Many such examples may be found in the MESDA field research files, including Maryland furniture moved to Virginia, Virginia furniture to North Carolina, and so on. This pattern, quite predictably, is true of the southern coastal plain, and was not repeated to the same extent in the east-west and north-south emigration into the southern backcountry taking place after the mid-eighteenth century.

The movement of southern furniture from region to region in the South, however, is not a matter of concern here. Instead, the importation of northern furniture is the subject of interest in this issue of the *Journal*. Northern furniture certainly was transported from point to point in the South by families who relocated, but of greater importance is an understanding of the means by which the northern work arrived in the South at its first destination. "Bespoke," or ordered, work constituted a portion of this, as did the shipment of venture cargoes, first by cabinetmakers themselves, and later by consignment merchants and "shippers." The most specialized and highly-organized of the latter, at least in regard to furniture, were the warehousemen. Such individuals, as the Alexander article explains, were comprised of both cabinetmakers and merchants. The ware-rooms managed by these entrepreneurs appear to have been stocked with furniture of sound quality, if conservative in detail, but furniture sent to the South purely as venture may not have always met such standards, at least by the Neoclassical period. Various newspaper allusions to quality indicate that a portion of the venture furniture sent in the coastwise trade after 1800 might well have been "export" quality; a great deal of it was sold at public vendue.

Aside from the burgeoning American merchant marine, the spectacular growth of the northern cabinet trade after the Revolution, and the rise of merchants who specialized in marketing northern furniture throughout the western hemisphere, it was the production of the furniture itself which often caused even urban cabinetmakers in the South to become less and less competitive in the marketplace. In the last decades of the eighteenth century, the essentially linear forms of the Baroque and Rococo styles gave way to the increasingly complex facades and details of the Neoclassical taste. Unlike even the elaborate earlier blockfront forms of the northern colonies, the undulating facades of the new furniture in the "antique" style often required laminated cores to prevent excessive movement and consequent

veneer checking of large elements such as the cupboard doors of a sideboard. The Neoclassical mode also called for the extensive application of highly-figured, matched veneers, and a complex stylistic vocabulary of ornamental inlay ranging from simple stringing to shaded and even engraved figural inlays. The increasing specialization encouraged by the growth of the cabinet trade in the urban North made the production of such work affordable there. Where specialization earlier had lain in peripheral trades such as turning and carving, by the late eighteenth century urban cabinetmakers depended more heavily upon specialists capable of cutting and laying veneer and producing inlay. Large urban shops could employ specialist inlay makers as inside contractors, or simply order such ornament from the shops that produced it. There was nothing except distance to prevent southern cabinetmakers from doing the same, and some did purchase such materials in the North, but that distance indeed was a deterrent. There were no mail-order catalogs for furniture components other than hardware, so the southern cabinetmaker frequently found it necessary to travel northward for supplies. Documented evidence of such sojourns is ample, but southern cabinetmakers nevertheless found it difficult to compete with northern shops by the early nineteenth century, and many of them indeed did not survive the attempt to compete. In short, the stylistic shift to the Neoclassical carried with it new furniture forms, new technology, and a demand for more complex materials, all of which were better suited to the production of a specialized urban shop. That is one of the principal reasons why Boston, New York, and Philadelphia created serious competition for the southern cabinet trade after the Revolution. Of these cities, New York emerges as the leading exporter of furniture that found its way to the South, and this is particularly evident in the quantity of surviving New York furniture with southern provenances. The following is a brief catalog of representative northern furniture recorded by MESDA; many more examples may be found in the museum's field research files, but they represent only a fraction of the total number of examples of northern work examined by the staff, most of which was not recorded. Of the northern pieces illustrated here, each has an early history that associates it with a specific family or region in the South.

ENGLAND



Figure 1. Easy chair, British or American, 1745-60, the base of black walnut, all framing members of beech. HOA 42 7/8, WOA at arms 31 1/4, DOA 30 1/2, MESDA Research File (MRF) S-14,233. Descended in the Lee and Reinhardt families of Westminster, Maryland and Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

With the exception of looking glasses, tall clocks, and upholstered work, the importation of British furniture to the southern colonies generally did not attain the large quantities once popularly assumed. An examination of English customs records for Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas appears to corroborate this, but the veracity of these records is subject to a certain amount of question. During the colonial period, Charleston merchants often offered a greater quantity of English furniture for sale than import records reflected in any given year. Further, private orders for furniture were not always well documented, and record of them is elusive now. There is no question that at least a few families relied heavily upon British artisans, as the fine work

ordered by John Drayton of Charleston in the 1730s attests. There are other such instances, such as the British furniture that Robert Beverly purchased for Blandfield in Essex County, Virginia, but the survival of such work is but a very tiny fraction of the furniture owned by southerners.

The easy chair illustrated here represents something of a dilemma in the identification of furniture with American provenances. The entire base is of American black walnut, while the frame is of beech; both of these woods have been tested microscopically by two qualified specialists. The presence of beech long has been considered an attribute of British furniture, but a substantial amount of American upholstered work with beech interior elements has been recorded from Virginia to Charleston. Nevertheless, the total absence of any other secondary wood in this chair suggests a British origin. In view of the extensive exportation of black walnut to the British Isles, the presence of that wood does not prove an American origin. Nevertheless, in the shaping of the rear feet and various aspects of the carving, the chair is related in some details to early New York chairs. A chair evidently from the same shop was illustrated in the catalog for Sotheby's sale 5905 (lot 354, 14 October 1989), but the seat frame proved to be a replacement.



Figure 2. Looking glass, British, 1755-70, mahogany and mahogany veneer with larch secondary. HOA 53, W'OA 26 at pediment, MRF S-7820. Descended in the Duvall family of "Marietta" in Prince Georges County, Maryland.

Substantial quantities of British looking glasses were imported to the southern colonies. After the Revolution, the importation of glasses from abroad continued, but the production of looking glasses in the urban North began to create competition for the British work, particularly as the Neoclassical style became popular. Looking glasses in the Rococo style with American provenances have not received sufficient study in the past; the secondary woods of many of them have not been analyzed. The academic pitch pediment and simple crosssetted backbanding of this example suggest urban work, and the presence of larch confirms a British origin. Examples such as this one should not be assumed to be English, for customs records indicate American importation from Scotland and Ireland as well.

MASSACHUSETTS



Figure 3. Gateleg table, eastern Massachusetts, 1700-20, walnut with white pine inner frame. HOA 26 3/4, WOA 43 at frame, DOA 16 3/4 at frame; courtesy of Tryon Palace Restoration. Descended in the Brinson family of Craven and Pamlico County, North Carolina.

The exportation of furniture from the Massachusetts Bay area to Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas began early, although New England families moving to the coastal South also brought household furniture with them. William Byrd commented in the late 1720s that the trade of parts of North Carolina had been

“engrossed by the Saints of New England” and a decade later complained that New England merchants were “able to undersell you in every market.”¹ Boston certainly was foremost in this, but furniture from Rhode Island and New Hampshire provided sharp competition with the products from the Bay area.

This table is difficult to date since the top is a twentieth-century replacement, and therefore the nature of the original leaf joints is unknown. The drawer also is a replacement, but its single central support is original, and is mortised to the front rail and nailed to the bottom edge of the rear skirt. The swing gates are supported by short feet mortised into the underside of the principal stretchers, a details also seen on gateleg tables associated with Charleston.



Figure 4. Desk, eastern Massachusetts, 1775-95, mahogany with poplar secondary. HOA 44 1/2, W'OA 41 7/8, DOA 23, MRF S-12,051; courtesy of Historic Hope Foundation, Inc. Descended from Zedekiah Stone (1742-96) of Massachusetts, who moved to Bertie County, North Carolina, in the mid-1760s.

Zedekiah Stone, whose son was North Carolina governor David Stone, almost certainly acquired this desk after his arrival

in North Carolina. That furniture of this type was available well inland via the river trade is evident in a 1794 advertisement by merchant Thomas Granberry, also a resident of Bertie County, who offered “some valuable mahogany Tables, Desks, plain and swell’d.”² Stone’s “swell’d,” or serpentine-front, desk appears to be a Salem product, but the use of poplar as a secondary wood is unusual in the Bay area. Desks in this style were produced in the Boston Charlestown/Salem orbit to the end of the eighteenth century.



Figure 5. Miniature desk, eastern Massachusetts, 1790-1800, birch with white pine secondary. HOA 30 3/8, W/OA 27 13/16, DOA 14 1/2, MRF S-12,171. Descended in the Leggett family of Edgecombe County, North Carolina.

A strong Boston-school detail on this piece is the form of the feet, which have an inboard profile consisting of an ogee and astragal. Such details are also characteristic of other New England coastal towns where Massachusetts Bay cabinetmakers emigrated, especially Newburyport, Massachusetts, and Portsmouth, New Hampshire, both of which exported furniture to the South. The use of white pine by no means precludes a southern origin, however, since that material was imported to the lower Chesapeake at least by the first quarter of the eighteenth century and is

commonly encountered in the furniture of southern port towns after the Revolution. Nevertheless, the combination of woods used along with construction in this instance indicate an import. Very little southern coastal plain furniture, for example, exposes drawer-blade construction at the case edges, and the majority of southern desks have mitred rather than straight fallboard battens. The pulls on this example have been replaced.



Figure 6. Sideboard, eastern Massachusetts, 1790-1800, mahogany and mahogany veneer with white pine secondary. HOA 41, W'OA 67, DOA 27, MRF McGehee 10/6-8. Descended in the Metts family of southeastern Virginia and New Hanover County, North Carolina.

The tapered feet of this sideboard, in addition to the inlay, identify it with prevalent styles in the Boston/Salem area. A virtually identical sideboard in the collection of Historic Hope Foundation in Windsor, North Carolina, has been attributed to the Salem cabinetmaker Nehemiah Adams (1769-1840), and descended in the Manning family of Salem. The form of the sideboard illustrated here conforms to the "sash-end" description frequently found in inventories and cabinetmakers' advertisements, for both sideboards and card tables with ovolo ends have the general plan of the muntin of a window sash. The inclusion of a secretary drawer here indicates the use of dining rooms as centers of household business, a custom that had existed much earlier. The style of the husks and lenticular inlays on the legs may be found on southern furniture that shows Salem

influence, particularly examples from Norfolk, Virginia, and Wilmington, North Carolina.



Figure 7. Card table, eastern Massachusetts, 1790-1810, mahogany with white pine and maple. HOA 29 1/2, WOA 34, DOA 17, MRF S-2751. Descended in the Tillinghast family of Fayetteville, North Carolina.

The molding of the edges of the top of this table suggest an eastern Massachusetts origin for this table, probably Salem. The hinged leaf is finished with a cove and bead, while the fixed leaf has a cove and fillet, thereby providing a somewhat more architectural appearance than matched moldings. Also typical of the region is a drawer concealed in the rear frame. The outer frame is not veneered, but instead is solid mahogany. Interestingly, a relation of the Tillinghast family was John W. Baker, a Fayetteville cabinetmaker. Baker announced in 1818 that he had "commenced the Cabinet business," a date too late to associate him with this table. Furthermore, his apprenticeship was served under a local master who had no connection with New England.³



Figure 8. Secretary with bookcase, eastern Massachusetts, 1790-1810, mahogany and mahogany veneer with white pine secondary. HOA 58 7/8, W'OA 41 1/4, DOA 20 1/2, MRF S-12,224. Descended in the Taylor family of Wilmington, North Carolina.

The practical size and conservative aspect of this desk very likely represent the norm in venture furniture shipped to the South. The mitred, cross-banded veneers of the doors and vertical veneering of the skirt are urban details, probably Boston, that is expected on imported work; vernacular furniture was not a component of the venture trade. The simple hinged and leather-covered writing flap of this desk was not a detail favored by southern cabinetmakers.

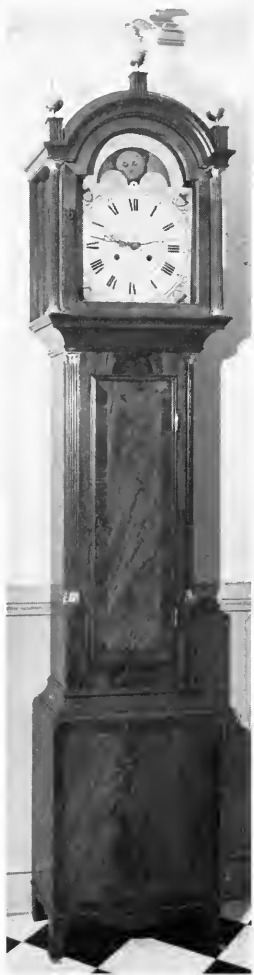


Figure 9. Tall clock, Boston, 1808-16, mahogany and mahogany veneer with white pine secondary. HOA 99, WOA at hood 19 7/8, DOA at hood 9 7/8, MRF S-5788. Descended in the Ranson family of Charles Town, West Virginia (formerly Virginia).

With the exception of areas where a strong German element was present, particularly western Maryland and much of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, the greatest number of surviving tall clocks with southern provenances are imports, most of them from Massachusetts. This is particularly true of the coastal South. The dial of the eight-day movement of this clock is inscribed "Munroe & Whiting/Baltimore," a significant documentation of the importance of the southern market to northern artisans. The partnership comprised of Nathaniel Munroe and Samuel Whiting operated in Boston from 1808 until about 1816, when Munroe moved to Baltimore. Munroe advertised his Clock

“Baltimore Clock & Timepiece Warehouse” in 1818, noting that he kept “constantly for sale, elegant Eight Day Clocks and Willard’s Time Pieces.”⁴ In view of both style and the double signature on the dial, the clock illustrated here almost certainly was made before Munroe’s move to Baltimore. The address on the dial, then, suggests that the Munroe and Whiting firm enjoyed a steady custom in Maryland, and it is probable that Munroe traveled there to establish sales outlets for the Boston clocks. The demand in Baltimore no doubt prompted his later move to that city.



Figure 10. Secretary with bookcase, Boston or Salem, 1800-15, mahogany with mahogany and maple veneers, white pine secondary throughout. HOA 83 1/2, WOA 44 3/4, DOA lower case 20 1/2, MRF S-12,184. Descended in the Boatwright family of Wilmington, North Carolina.

The lancet arches of this example's bookcase doors are a familiar Massachusetts detail, as are the form of the engaged, reeded columns of the corners and the lavish use of crotch-figured maple inlay. The impact of the Massachusetts style was strong in furniture actually made in Wilmington, even though the emigration of a Boston or Salem cabinetmaker to that city has not been documented. A Wilmington secretary with bookcase⁵ with yellow pine and cypress secondary woods in the collection of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History closely parallels this Massachusetts piece stylistically.



Figure 11. Sideboard, Salem, Massachusetts, 1800-15, mahogany and mahogany veneer with white pine secondary throughout. HOA 41, WOA 71 3/4, DOA 25 at center, MRF S-6957. Descended in the Boothe family of Alexandria, Virginia.

The plan of this sideboard, as well as the spool-like turnings of the upper legs, are details typical of the Salem school. Other features, however, are not as strongly attributable. For example, the veneer surrounds of the ovals are butt-jointed in the center and end of each oval, rather than finished with mitred joints at the ends of the oval panels. The feet have a robust swell that is a form commonly associated with New York. It is possible that this sideboard was made south of Massachusetts, reflecting the constant movement of journeymen in the cabinet trade, yet the employment of white pine as the sole secondary material is more typical of Massachusetts Bay work than furniture produced in the middle Atlantic states.



Figure 12. Pembroke table, Boston or Salem, Massachusetts, 1800-15, mahogany with white pine secondary. HOA 28 3/8, W/OA 34, DOA 45 1/4 open, MRF S-12,049. Descended from Governor David Stone of Bertie County, North Carolina.

Part of the original furnishings of Hope Plantation, this table has upper leg turnings that essentially are the same as the preceding sideboard, but in this instance the feet are of a form commonly associated with Salem. A large number of Massachusetts Pembroke tables with southern histories have been observed by the MESDA staff, indicating that this particular form was well suited to the venture market. The wooden knob on this example is a replacement for a brass pull.



Figure 13. Card table, Salem, Massachusetts, 1810-20, mahogany and mahogany veneer with white pine and birch (gate frame) secondary woods. HOA 30, WOA 37 3/8, DOA 18 1/2 closed, MRF S-2813. Descended from William Wright of New Hanover and Pender counties, North Carolina.

The origin of this table is documented by the initials “ES” (fig. 13a) painted on the rear frame of this table. Elijah Sanderson, along with his brother Jacob, operated a large cabinetmaking establishment in Salem. The firm was successful enough to repeatedly charter vessels for transporting their wares to the South for sale in the venture trade. Despite the volume of work which they sold outside Massachusetts, the Sandersons were not without competition. In 1803 their agent, ship’s master Elias Grant, wrote the brothers from Richmond that “the goods are not sold as yet Part of them are sold I have tried them twice at Vendue but sold Little and what is Sold is Very Lo . . . the Reason they don’t sell their is been a Vessel from New York with furniture & Sold it Very Lo. . . .”⁶ Although a relatively elaborate example, the table illustrated here almost certainly was a venture piece rather than “bespoke” or ordered. A virtually identical table with a Beaufort County, North Carolina, history has been recorded.



Figure 14. Top of a high chest of drawers, Newport, 1750, walnut with chestnut secondary. HOA 41 5/8, W/OA 37 3/4, DOA 19 3/4, MRFS- 12,013. Purchased in Perquimans County, North Carolina.

Although without a specific family provenance, this remnant of a cabriole high chest survives as what is possibly the earliest documented example of venture furniture sent to North Carolina. Bearing the signature "Maid by Constant Bailey/ Shop joyner in Newport/ Rhode Island," the piece very likely was part of a cargo of furniture sent to Carolina by Bailey and two other Newport cabinetmakers. In March, 1750 "Constant Bailey John Cahoon and Benjamin Peabody all of Newport" chartered the sloop *Mary* and the services of her master, John Lyon, to carry a cargo to North Carolina. Since Lyon's duties after reaching his destination were not specified, presumably the cabinetmakers had a Carolina agent for the disposal of their wares.⁷ This chest of drawers appears to have been separated from its base after the middle of the nineteenth century.



Figure 15. Desk, Rhode Island, 1750-70, maple with chestnut and poplar secondary. HOA 40 7/8, W'OA 38 3/8, DOA 20 7/16, MRF S-5634. Undetermined early provenance in Edenton, North Carolina, possibly the Perry family.

Rhode Island, including both Providence and Newport, was a steady source of furniture shipped to the South from before the mid-eighteenth century well into the Neoclassical period, despite the dominance of New York and Philadelphia in venture furniture after 1800. One of the most common case forms shipped to the South during the colonial period were maple desks; most of them were either stained or painted with a red pigmented wash and then finished with red-tinted varnish in imitation of mahogany. This example, however, due to its excellent fiddleback figure, was stained with a water-based dye such as dilute nitric acid, and finished with a tinted varnish. In 1788 the brig *Recovery* from Newport arrived in Wilmington, North Carolina, laden with a variety of goods including seven maple desks. Nine days later the Wilmington merchant William Taggart advertised “Maple Desks” among the new goods in his store.⁸



Figure 16. Tea table, Newport, Rhode Island, 1760-90, mahogany with poplar hinge block. HOA 27 1/2, MRF S-12,212. Descended from Joshua G. Wright of Wilmington, North Carolina.

Well-documented Newport features are revealed in the classical column, dished top, stepped profile of the top cleats, and the form of the legs and feet of this table, which is one of the earliest surviving New England pieces imported to the Cape Fear. A virtually identical table, but with claw feet, is in the collection of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. It is attributed to John Goddard.⁹



Figure 17. Card table, Newport, Rhode Island, 1760-75, mahogany (secondary woods not recorded). HOA 27 1/2, W'OA 36, DOA 17 3/4, MRF S-9136. Descended in the Pinckney family of Charleston.

In order to escape the oppressive heat of Low Country summers, Charleston gentry frequently sojourned to the North, particularly during the late colonial period and after. One of the favored retreats was Newport. At least one fine Charleston piece, a fine carved tea table, made its way to Rhode Island in the late nineteenth century. It was the property of Elisha Middleton, who had vacationed in Newport since childhood. The table is now in the collection of the Rhode Island School of Design. In reverse fashion, the wealthy Pinckney family of Charleston acquired this card table in Newport, and it has remained in Charleston, presumably since the eighteenth century. It is missing its top leaf. The precisely-squared face of the damaged left foot indicates that at least one foot of this table was constructed of two pieces originally. Fairly common on London work, such lamination is not often noted on American furniture before the late Neoclassical period.



Figure 18. Desk, New York, 1765-70, mahogany with mahogany and poplar secondary woods. HOA 42 7/16, W'OA 46, DOA 23 3/4, MRF S-13,883. Collection of Tryon Palace Restoration Complex, acc. TP. 87.47.1. Descended in the Brinson family of New Bern, North Carolina.

Family tradition suggests with excellent credibility that this desk originally was the property of Josiah Martin, the last royal governor of North Carolina. Martin was appointed to the post in December, 1770, and arrived in New Bern the following August. Since he was a resident of Long Island at the time of his appointment, Martin probably obtained a large percentage of his furnishings in New York. There was no standing furniture at Tryon Palace, as the governor's residence in New Bern was called. After Martin fled, leaving virtually all of his household effects behind, his effects were sold at public vendue in 1777. Richard Caswell, the first governor of the new state, purchased five desks and one "escritoire" at the sale. One of the purchases was described as "One mahogany desk," and it sold for £12.¹⁰

The desk illustrated here is typically New York in style, generous proportions, and construction. It is fitted with three-quarter-depth dustboards dadoed to the drawer supports. The principle drawers have frames of red cedar and bottoms of mahogany, certainly placing the desk above the level of venture furniture. The desk is now a part of the Tryon Palace collection.



Figure 19. Dining table, New York, 1755-75, mahogany with maple gate frames and white pine inner frame. HOA 27 7/8, WOA open 54 7/8, DOA 50 1/4, MRF S-3942. Undetermined provenance in Pamlico County, North Carolina.

Although New York was not to dominate the coastal furniture trade until after the Revolution, southern port records reveal that at least a small amount of furniture from that city was imported during the colonial period. Affluent southerners probably preferred rectangular tables, two of which conveniently could be placed together when the occasion required. Indeed, most dining tables made in the lower Chesapeake South were of rectangular form after the first quarter of the eighteenth century, and it is common to find “sets” of dining tables listed in inventories. Governor Martin himself owned a “pair large mahogany tables” that sold for £10 in 1777.¹¹ These tables presumably were of New York origin, and probably not unlike the example shown here. The skirt shaping, blocky nature of the claw feet, and “soft” transition between the turned legs and the upper leg stiles are typical of that city’s work.

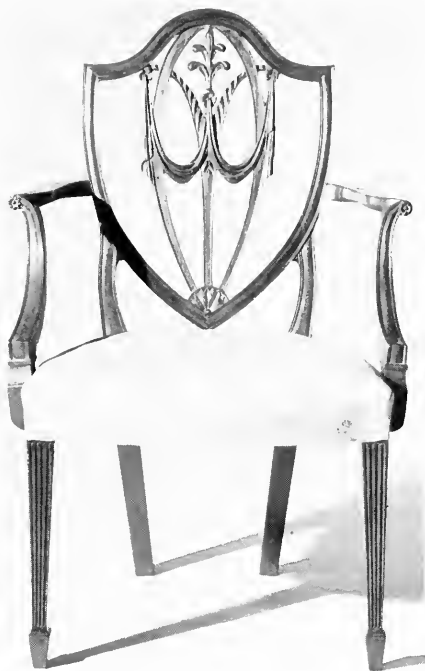


Figure 20. Armchair, New York, 1790-1800, mahogany with white pine, ash, and cherry secondary woods. HOA 38 1/2. WOA 20 3/4 at seat front, MRF S-8012. Descended in the Tylee family of Charleston.

Seating furniture represented the largest component of northern furniture shipped to the South during the Neoclassical period, and New York chairs of various styles have been found in profusion in every region from Alexandria to Savannah. Charleston was one port which not only received considerable quantities of New York furniture, but also imported cabinet-makers and carvers from that city. The resulting stylistic impact upon Charleston furniture is considerable. Two Charleston-made armchairs in the MESDA collection have backs virtually identical to the chair illustrated here.



Figure 21. Armchair, New York, 1790-1800, mahogany with birch and cherry secondary woods, MRF S-8286. Descended in the McAlpin family of Savannah.

Most of the surviving Neoclassical furniture with Savannah provenances is of New York origin. Two identical armchairs, one of them with a history of descent in the Rutledge family, have been recorded in Charleston (MRF S-8042). The arms, arm supports, and legs of the example shown here mirror the same elements on the preceding example; the radiused tops of the leg reeding is a detail common to much New York furniture. Also like the preceding chair, the frame of this example is constructed with diagonal corner bracing dovetailed to the top of the seat rails.



Figure 22. Dressing table, New York, 1790-1810, mahogany with white pine secondary. HOA 33, W'OA 38 1/2, DOA 20 1/4, MRF S-423. Long but undetermined provenance in South Carolina.

Found in Summerville, South Carolina, but without a history of descent, this table almost certainly was a "bespoken" piece imported to Charleston. Once a part of the MESDA collection, this table was thought to have been a low country product until the examination of several other examples from the same shop eventually led to a New York attribution. One of the pieces associated with this example is an exceptionally elaborate sideboard with a Virginia provenance that is in the collection of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. The table illustrated here, due to the extent of its complex incised inlay and elegant fitments concealed under the top (various compartments and a hinged glass), hardly could have been a venture export. The form and height of the piece fits the description of "chamber table" often observed in advertisements by New York cabinetmakers and shippers. The only really conventional New York inlay on the table is the series

of four vertical triple strings just under the top on the upper leg stiles. Although the origin of this table is now without question, the presence of white pine would not have precluded a Charleston origin, or even manufacture in any southern port city, for that wood was imported to the South in profusion from at least the first quarter of the eighteenth century, and it is common in southern coastal furniture after the Revolution, most particularly in Charleston.



Figure 23. Sideboard, New York, 1790-1810, mahogany and mahogany veneer with white pine, ash, and poplar secondary woods, MRF S-7672. Descended in the Tayloe family of Richmond County, Virginia.

The spectacular veneers and flamboyant decoration with stringing and other inlay on this sideboard offer considerable contrast to most eastern Virginia-made Neoclassical furniture, which tends to be somewhat more conservative. The stylistic restraint exercised by shops in Norfolk, Richmond, and Petersburg cannot be ascribed merely to lack of cabinetmakers' ability to adapt to the new taste, for the earlier Chesapeake taste for plain but elegant work persisted somewhat into the Neoclassical period. Details of this sash-ended sideboard reveal the stylistic flow of details that had become rampant in coastal America after the Revolution. The compass-drawn stringing of the leg stiles, for example, is a common frieze motif on Baltimore tall clocks. The extensive use of oval panels of veneer with mitred veneer surrounds is typical of New York, but some of the ovals are not geometrically correct, and the lack of book-matching of the veneers is surprising.



Figure 24. Card table, New York or North Carolina, 1790-1810, mahogany and mahogany veneer with walnut gate frame and white pine inner frame. HOA 28 9/16, WOA 38, DOA 18 7/8 closed, MRF S-5630. Descended in the Cooper family of Granville County, North Carolina.

Richmond and Petersburg provided a ready overland commercial link with the eastern and central North Carolina piedmont well before the Revolution, so the conveyance of New York furniture into the rural interior was nothing unusual. This particular example, however, poses certain problems to the furniture historian. Its five-leg construction, leaved leg stile inlays, cusped leg stringing supporting a small pellet at the top, and the use of vertical three-part strings at the side fillets of the ovolos are all overtly New York details also found in at least one North Carolina shop which undoubtedly employed a New York artisan. The use of walnut gate frames suggests that this example may indeed have been made in Carolina, but the proof is not definitive. A pair of card tables sharing most of the details of this example descended in the family of John Haywood of Raleigh, and a sideboard with a clear provenance in Wilmington, North Carolina, has been attributed to the same shop. The pair of tables and the sideboard share the extensive use of yellow pine second-



dary wood. Interestingly, cabinetmaker Thomas Reynolds of Warrenton, North Carolina, not far from Granville County, advertised in the *Raleigh Register* for 12 April 1813 that he had employed a cabinetmaker who had “worked in N. York, Philadelphia, Norfolk.” A comparison with the gate construction between the illustrated example and the Haywood tables might be revealing.¹²



Figure 25. Pembroke table, New York, 1790-1810, mahogany and mahogany veneer with white pine drawer core and inner frame, cherry gate frame, and poplar drawer frame and bottom. HOA 28, WOA 41 1/2 open, DOA 31 3/4, MRF S-8242. Descended in the Chisholm family of Savannah.

This table shares much the same figural leaf inlay on its leg stiles as the previous example, but without the incising. The consistent style of inlays from one shop to another in a large urban area is not unusual since cabinetmakers were able to purchase decorative details from specialized inlay makers; ample records indicate that such inlays were sent to southern cabinetmakers as well. One highly vernacular sideboard from Fayetteville, North Carolina, for example, is ornamented with Baltimore shells (see Bivins, *Furniture of Coastal North Carolina*, no. 7.64a). Also shared with the previous example is the cusped leg stringing supporting a pellet, a typical New York detail. Like card tables, Pembroke, or breakfast, tables were a very popular venture-cargo item, and port records indicate significant numbers of them arriving in the coastal South.

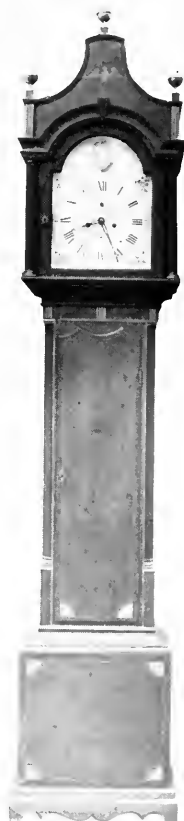


Figure 26. Tall clock, New York, 1790-1800, mahogany and mahogany veneer with poplar secondary, MRF S-3051. Descended in the Nixon family of Perquimans County, North Carolina.

The form of the hood, plinth, and base of this clock is characteristically New York, and this would have been evident even without the signature on the white dial: "EFFINGHAM EMBREE/ NEW-YORK." This is the only New York eight-day tall clock recorded in coastal North Carolina, which is surprising even in view of the Massachusetts Bay domination of the southern clock trade. The Nixon family which owned this clock had settled in North Carolina by the beginning of the eighteenth century, and were part of the substantial Quaker settlement moving out of southeastern Virginia and into Pasquotank and Perquimans counties. The latter county supported several Quaker cabinet-makers who were producing urban-quality furniture two decades before the Revolution.



Figure 27. Swinging glass, New York or Richmond, ca. 1817, mahogany and mahogany veneer with white pine secondary. HOA 25 1/8, WOA 23, DOA 7 3/4, MESDA accession 2539-2. Descended in the Mumford, Epps, and Jones families of Halifax County, North Carolina.



Figure 28. Masonic master's chair, New York, ca. 1810, mahogany, secondary woods not determined. HOA 57, WOA 23 7/8, MRF S-8288. The property of Solomon's Lodge No.1, Savannah, since 1808.

That southerners looked to New York as a ready source of household goods at highly competitive prices is amply evident. New York also was perceived as an arbiter of fashion as well, and the existence of public, ecclesiastical, and ceremonial furniture procured from New York is well documented. One such example is three chairs in the Savannah Masonic Lodge that was established in 1734. A master's chair, warden's chair, and junior warden's chair, all attributed to New York, were the result of lodge minutes for 19 May 1808 that named a committee to procure "necessary furniture" for the lodge. John Scott, a Savannah cabinetmaker, served on this committee; he is known to have imported and sold New York work in his own shop.¹⁴ The upper leg turnings of this chair are typically New York in style, and the upper arm

supports are an inverted version of the standard swelling form that characterizes turned feet on New York furniture.



Figure 29. Chamber table, New York, 1810-15, mahogany and mahogany veneer with white pine and poplar secondary woods. HOA 35 5/8, W'OA 36, DOA 18 5/8, MRF S-12,187. Descended in the Boatwright family of Wilmington, North Carolina.

A highly characteristic New York furniture form was the rectangular table fitted with a shelf below supported on a pair of stretchers. Due to their height, they are often thought of today as serving pieces, but it is evident that they were considered to be bedroom furniture in the early nineteenth century. Almost certainly an item of venture furniture, the table illustrated here has a reeded top and upper leg stiles as well as cast lion's paw feet, all of which, like the original lion's head brasses, were much favored in New York.



Figure 30. Work table, New York, 1810-15, mahogany and mahogany veneer with white pine secondary throughout. HOA 27 1/2, WOA 17 7/8 at corners, DOA 17 5/8 at corners, MRF S-12,218. Descended in the de Rosset family of Wilmington, North Carolina.

The “turreted” upper leg stiles of this delicate table are popularly associated with eastern Massachusetts, but the form was used elsewhere, as this table documents. Often described as a “sewing” table, examples such as this one, which was not fitted with a waste bag and attendant sliding frame, were used for various purposes, and generally were described simply as “work” tables. The multiple astragal turnings of the leg stiles on this table, the form of the reeding which is radiused at the top, and the turnings of the feet are almost identical to a mahogany card table (MRF S-2470) bearing the inscription “Joel Ketchum merchant/ 204 Pearl.” New York City directories list Ketchum at the Pearl Street address from 1815-22. Also listed in the directories as early as 1797 was cabinetmaker William Ketchum, who from 1809-17 was located at 161 Duane Street in New York. A possible relationship between the two men has not been established by the MESDA staff.



Figure 31. Work table, New York, 1810-15, mahogany and mahogany veneer with poplar secondary. HOA 30, WOA 25 1/8, DOA 13, MRF S-7632. Descended in the Charlton family of Savannah.

That tables such as this example were intended for various uses is evident in the compartmented drawer, which contains a ratchetted writing board. The tambour door provides access to the lower storage area. The bent astragal ends as well as the extensive use of canvas-lined tambour on this table were features best suited to production in a large urban shop; this table probably was a venture item. The carved paw feet were an alternative to cast feet, and very likely were less expensive due to the time required to clean up and polish the fine detail of cast paw feet. Such tables usually were fitted with casters, and those on this example are original.



Figure 32. Card table, New York, 1810-20, mahogany and mahogany veneer with poplar and cherry secondary woods. HOA 30 1/8, W/OA 35 5/8, DOA 18, MRF S-8460. Descended in the Charlton or Hartridge families of Savannah.

Commonly known in the cabinet trade of the period as “pillar and claw” tables, this basic form was used for various types of tables including Pembrokes, work tables, and card tables. They often are assigned dates later than their actual manufacture. One prolific Norfolk cabinetmaker, James Woodward, executed work that was much in the New York manner. In 1819 he billed Humerson Skipwith of Mecklenburg County, Virginia \$45 for a “large Pillow & Claw Breakfast Table” (MESDA accession 3813) that is very close in style to the card table illustrated here.¹⁵ The truncated corners of the top, form of the base, and carving style of this card table are typically New York. The side toes of the feet were separate pieces glued in place, as the left rear leg reveals.



Figure 33. Bedstead, New York, 1815-20, mahogany with poplar rails. HOA 96, WOA 59 1/2, DOA 85 1/2, MRF S-12,208. Descended in the Watters family of New Hanover County, North Carolina.

The production of elaborate, tall mahogany beds was best suited to large urban shops equipped with long-bed lathes and efficient carvers, and of late Neoclassical bedsteads surviving in much of the South, including the backcountry and the Mississippi Valley, the vast majority are of New York origin. New York beds are also found in Charleston, but that city is known for its large production of bedsteads, and therefore could offer strong competition to imported beds. Indeed, more Charleston bedsteads from the Neoclassical period survive than any other region of the South, and many of them show strong New York influence, even

to the use of “removable” headboards. On the example illustrated here, the form of the reeding and the swelled feet, as well as the sliding panels which conceal the bed bolts, are typical New York features. Most such beds were provided with full architectural cornices, which must have been difficult to ship without damage, since many such cornices were not made to disassemble.

The first owner of this bed, William Watters, also owned a Wilmington-made sideboard wholly in the late Neoclassical New York style of 1815-20 (MRF 12,205).

PHILADELPHIA



Figure 34. Chest, Chester County, Pennsylvania, 1735-45, walnut with yellow pine secondary. HOA 10 1/8, W/OA 21 1/4, DOA 14 5/8, MRF S-13,010. Descended in the Registrar family of Greeneville, Tennessee.

Although not a Philadelphia object, this small chest is significant in regard to the nature of early households in the backcountry South. Before the early nineteenth century, very few roads allowed the passage of wagons large enough to accommodate furniture of any size, even on the well-used Great Wagon Road traversing the length of the Shenandoah Valley. Settlers moving to the piedmont of the Carolinas and across the Blue Ridge simply could not expect to carry much more than clothing, staples, arms and tools. The exceptions to this are rare. This chest, nicely ornamented with herringbone banding and the classic use of “line and berry” inlay was small enough to transport and no doubt was a symbolic object to its owners. The chased escutcheon is original. Chester County was one of the primary origins of settlers moving into the backcountry South after the 1730s. Some of the

inlay employed on last-quarter eighteenth century furniture from southwestern Virginia, eastern Tennessee, and northwestern South Carolina bears an interesting similarity to earlier Chester County work.



Figure 35. Dressing table, Philadelphia, 1745-55, walnut with white cedar and yellow pine secondary. HOA 28 5/8, WOA 34 1/4, DOA 21 5/16, MRF S-12,139. Descended in the Jones and Moore families of New Bern, North Carolina.

Even though it was colonial America's largest city, Philadelphia, like New York, did not compete with the volume of New England furniture exportation until after the Revolution. Nevertheless, port records do reveal the arrival of Philadelphia work in southern ports before the 1770s. Lacking the more usual five-drawer form, this piece is the simplest form of dressing table that could be expected from a Philadelphia shop. As such, the table probably represents venture furniture, despite the evidence of an early date provided by its original brasses and drawer bottoms set into dados, flush with the drawer frames and fronts. Yellow pine is a common secondary wood in southeastern Pennsylvania, as is white cedar. The latter was a preferred material in Philadelphia, possibly because it could be rived after it was cured.

The evidence of riving can be found on cedar elements in Philadelphia furniture to the end of the eighteenth century. At the time that this table was made, New Bern was a village of probably no more than 300 residents. Situated sixty miles across Pamlico Sound from Ocracoke Inlet, New Bern imported a significant amount of northern furniture, far more than the adjacent Albemarle region which comprises the northeastern sector of the state.



Figure 36. High chest of drawers, Philadelphia, 1745-55, walnut and walnut veneer with poplar, white cedar, and yellow pine secondary woods. HOA 85 5/8, W/OA 43, DOA 24, MRF S-2373. Descended in the Skinner family of Perquimans County, North Carolina.

Many examples of Philadelphia furniture in the Baroque style have been attributed to Baltimore. The chamfered case of this example, in combination with the attenuated and sparsely-

detailed carving and enclosed ogee head (“bonnet top”), are details which have been cited as Maryland characteristics. As Luke Beckerdite has pointed out, however, examples such as this high chest were made during a period when Baltimore was scarcely more than a village. Further, there is a substantial body of Philadelphia furniture which may be used in comparative analysis to dispel the notion of a Maryland attribution for this and other early case pieces. Joshua Skinner was a prominent Quaker planter who moved to North Carolina from Isle of Wight County, Virginia, some time before 1729; he married Sarah Creecy in 1745.¹⁶ It would not have been unusual for a man of Skinner’s stature to attend the church’s Yearly Meeting in Philadelphia, although no record of that has been found in the minutes of the Perquimans Meeting.



Figure 37. Card table, Philadelphia, 1780-90, mahogany with white pine, oak, white cedar, and poplar secondary woods. HOA 28 1/4, W'OA 36 3/4, DOA 18 3/4 closed, MRF S-11,743. Descended in the Cannon family of Charleston.

Daniel Cannon (1726-1802), a prominent Charleston builder, probably was the original owner of this table. Stylistically transitional in nature, the table combines Rococo top shaping and a

gadrooned skirt (the front gadrooning is missing) with molded, tapering legs. The relative simplicity of the table suggests that it was a venture piece. Although Charleston received some furniture exported from Philadelphia and hosted a few Philadelphia-trained cabinetmakers during the colonial period, it is significant that there is virtually no Philadelphia stylistic influence on Charleston furniture prior to the Neoclassical period.



Figure 38. Desk, Philadelphia, 1765-85, mahogany and mahogany veneer with poplar, yellow pine, and white cedar secondary woods. HOA 42 1/2, WOA 42 3/8, DOA 22 1/8, MRF S-3984. Descended in the Upshur family of Accomac County, Virginia.

Despite the convenient transportation of goods down the Delaware River to the Head of Elk (now Elkton, Maryland) and overland to the upper Chesapeake, surprisingly little early furniture from Philadelphia has been recorded in the Chesapeake, nor does the Delaware Valley style make itself felt in furniture produced on either shore of the Bay, with the exception of Baltimore. Instead, the transmission of details out of Philadelphia followed a southwestern path, and had little to do with the development of furniture styles anywhere in the coastal South below Baltimore.

This desk was part of the furnishings of Warwick plantation on the Eastern Shore. Its conservative interior, "island" mahogany veneering of the drawer fronts, robust ogee feet, and quarter columns are hallmarks of the late Rococo style in Philadelphia. Benjamin Lehman's 1786 book of prices for Philadelphia cabinet work described a plain mahogany desk "with a Prospect & Swelled Brackets [ogee feet]" at £11, with the addendum "Note Add for Quater Columns 10 Shillings."¹⁷ The veneer almost certainly was an extra charge as well, but Lehman did not record that.



Figure 39. Looking glass, Philadelphia, 1796-1804, mahogany with white pine secondary wood. HOA 45 5/8, WOA 23 7/8, MRF S-10,423. Descended in the Joliffe family of Frederick County, Virginia.

Since the sawn-work of Rococo looking-glass frames was laid out with patterns, a comparison of this example with the crest and skirt patterns of some of the glasses labeled by Elliotts of

Philadelphia provides a firm attribution. John Elliott (1713- 1791) arrived in Philadelphia from England in 1753, and offered both imported work as well as “looking Glasses In neat Mahogany Frames of American Manufacture,” as one of his labels stated it. He was later joined by his son, John Elliott, Jr.; a looking glass in the collection of Winterthur Museum that is virtually identical to the example shown here bears the circa 1796-1804 label of the younger Elliott.¹⁸ The importation of Philadelphia work to the Virginia backcountry was not unusual, especially to Frederick County, whose bustling county seat, Winchester, had strong commercial ties with Philadelphia. One prominent former Philadelphian, Isaac Zane, Jr., was the proprietor of nearby Marlboro Furnace, and he not only ordered carved casting patterns from Philadelphia, but furniture as well.



Figure 40. Armchair, Philadelphia, 1797, mahogany (secondary woods and dimensions not recorded). Photograph courtesy of Edward Clement. Descended in the Steele family of Salisbury, Rowan County, North Carolina.

The exportation of fine quality Philadelphia work was by no means confined to regions with easy transportation links with the

city. The western piedmont of North Carolina could be reached via the Petersburg-Salisbury Stage Road, and it no doubt was by that route that John Steele of Salisbury, who finished his nicely-detailed frame house during the late 1790s, obtained his furniture. Both the house and much of its contents still survive. The shop that produced some of Steele's furniture is documented in an existing bill from Philadelphia cabinetmaker John Douglass to Tench Francis, Steele's factor in the city. Of the enumerated items still surviving are "1 large Center Mahogany dining table 2 Circular Ends £20:0:0," "1 Sideboard (Velection front) £20:0:0," and "10 Mahogany Chairs latest Pattern covered & garnished in Sattin Hair Cloth at 10 Dollars 50/100 £39:7:6 . . . 2 Arm Chairs to suit at 15 25/100 £11:8:9."¹⁹ In view of the quality of both the furniture and its coverings, Steele must have spent some anxious months wondering about the effects of a long, rough, and dusty transport upon his expensive furniture. The "Velection" front which Douglass described for the sideboard was an alliterative spelling of "bolection." Douglass is listed in Philadelphia city directories at various locations from 1785 until 1814.



Figure 41. Pembroke table, Philadelphia, 1810-20, mahogany and mahogany veneer with white pine, poplar, and cherry secondary woods. HOA 33 1/2, WOA 42 3/4 open, DOA 33, MRF S-2692. Descended in the Murphy family of Pender County, North Carolina.

Much in contrast with Steele's more elaborate "bespoke" furniture, this simple breakfast table is a typical venture piece, no doubt received by a Wilmington merchant and sold to its first owners, who lived in the county adjacent to New Hanover where the port is located. The attribution of conservative furniture such as this table can be problematical, since very little such work is illustrated in standard references. This table was incorrectly attributed to a Fayetteville cabinet shop in *Furniture of Coastal North Carolina* (no. 7.72), but further study of construction as well as the upper leg and foot turnings provide a sound Philadelphia attribution.



Figure 42. Windsor armchair, Philadelphia, 1790-5, white pine seat, hickory back and spindles, maple legs. HOA 38, WOA 25 1/4, MRF S-6006. Descended in the Thornton family of Spotsylvania County, Virginia.

Although Windsor furniture was produced in the South, notable centers of manufacture being Frederick County, Maryland, Richmond, Virginia, and Salem and Fayetteville in North

Carolina, by far the largest percentage of surviving Windsors with southern provenances are of Philadelphia origin. That city developed an efficient and very specialized manufacture of Windsor furniture well before most other urban areas. Virtually all such work shipped out of Philadelphia was part of the venture trade, and southern port records reveal large quantities of Philadelphia Windsor chairs and settees constantly arriving. The familiar sack-back chair, as they were known during the period, was introduced by the mid 1760s. This example bears the brand "I. WIRE" for John Wire, who is listed in Philadelphia directories on South Front Street and South Water Street from 1791-1813.²⁰ The robust turnings of this chair and the lack of swelled back spindles, however, seem to suggest a date earlier than 1791. The original paint appears to have been a Spanish brown.



Figure 43. Windsor settee, Philadelphia, 1770-90, poplar seat, maple legs, other woods not recorded. HOA 28 1/4, WOA 87, DOA 24, MRF S-4540. Descended in the Gwathmey family of King William County, Virginia.

Although large settees consumed valuable space in the holds of the sloops, schooners, brigs, and barks that plied the Atlantic trade, such pieces were a viable commodity in the South since they were not well suited for manufacture by any but the most well-equipped establishments. Indeed, southern-made Windsor settees, even late examples, are virtually nonexistent. Settees were popular for both stair passage and porch use, but like other Windsor seating furniture were also considered appropriate for outdoor use. This example is branded "F. TRUMBLE;" Francis Trumble (1716?-1798) was a well-known Philadelphia manufacturer of Windsor furniture, and made seventy-eight Windsors for the State House in that city.²¹ In addition to other damage, this settee has lost several inches of its lower legs.

FOOTNOTES

1. William Byrd, *Histories of the Dividing Line betwixt Virginia and North Carolina*, ed. William K. Boyd (1929; rept. New York, 1967), 42; Marion Tinling, ed., *The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia, 1684-1776* (Charlottesville, Va., 1977), 540.
2. *Edenton State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 13 June 1794.
3. John Bivins, Jr., *The Furniture of Coastal North Carolina* (Winston-Salem, N.C., 1988), 453, hereafter cited as *FCNC*.
4. Chris H. Bailey, *Two Hundred Years of American Clocks and Watches* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1975), 59; *Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 27 May 1818.
5. *FCNC*, no. 7.37.
6. Mabel Munson Swan, "Coastwise Cargoes of Venture Furniture," *Antiques* (April 1949): 278-70.
7. Newport Historical Society, vault A, box 112, folder 22.
8. "Vessels Entered," Port Brunswick Records, North Carolina Division of Archives and History; *Wilmington Centinel, and General Advertiser*, 26 Oct. 1788.
9. Brock Jobe and Myrna Kaye, *New England Furniture: The Colonial Era* (Boston, 1984), no. 74.
10. Beth G. Crabtree, *North Carolina Governors, 1585-1958* (Raleigh, N.C., 1958), 44; Walter Clark, ed. *The State Records of North Carolina*, 22 (Goldsboro, N.C., 1907), 881-3.
11. Clark, *State Records*, 880.
12. The Haywood card tables and the sideboard are illustrated in *FCNC*, nos. 7.43, 7.44. In the exhibition catalog *Wilmington Furniture 1720-1860* (Wilmington, N.C., 1989, p. 61), the author speculated on the possibility that the tables may have been made in Warrenton by Reynolds' journeyman, who later moved to Wilmington, where he produced the sideboard.
13. The *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 1 July 1817 (Evans's first advertisement, wherein he listed himself as "CARVER & GILDER And Picture Frame Maker, (LATE FROM N. YORK);" *Richmond Hustings Deeds No. 13, 1817*, 636-38, 4 Sept. 1817 (mortgage of effects).
14. Jane Webb Smith, *Georgia's Legacy: History Charted Through the Arts* (exhibition catalog, Athens, Ga., 1985), 55.
15. *MESDA Luminary*, v. 8, no. 1 (Winter 1987): 5.
16. Luke Beckerdite, "A Problem of Identification: Philadelphia and Baltimore Furniture Styles in the Eighteenth Century" *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, no. 1 (May 1986): 21-64, n. 39.
17. William Macpherson Hornor, Jr., *Philadelphia Furniture* (Philadelphia, 1935), 122.
18. Helen Comstock, *The Looking Glass in America, 1700-1825* (New York, 1968), 86-7, 101 (fig. 63); Herbert F. Schiffer, *The Mirror Book* (Exton, Pa., 1983), fig. 385.

19. John Steele Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Louis Round Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
20. MESDA research files.
21. Charles Santore, *The Windsor Style in America* (Philadelphia, 1981), 210.



Figure 1. Mordecai House in Raleigh, North Carolina. South elevation. This is the main addition added in 1825-6 by William Nichols. At its height, Mordecai was the center of a plantation of over 3,000 acres.

“Plain and Handsome”:

*Documented Furnishings at Mordecai House,
1780-1830*

KENNETH JOEL ZOGRY

The Mordecai House (circa 1785 and 1826) in Raleigh, North Carolina, is an excellent surviving example of southern piedmont style and taste. Built and occupied by five consecutive generations of the Lane-Mordecai-Little family, the house contains a collection of original furnishings and memorabilia that spans two centuries. Even more remarkably, a voluminous amount of documentary evidence — wills, inventories, deeds, letters, account books — about both the house and contents have survived and are preserved in several public and private collections.¹

The structure now called Mordecai House began as a simple but refined two-story, four-room clapboard structure built about 1785 for Wake County planter Henry Lane, seven years before the capital city of Raleigh was established in 1792.² The plan was the typical hall-and-parlor arrangement, with an enclosed staircase to the second floor located in the smaller southern or parlor room. The facade was basically symmetrical, framed by Flemish bond end chimneys (fig. 2). A small porch, slightly off center because of the larger size of the hall, gave protected access to the front door. The two first-floor rooms were spacious and light, with eleven-foot ceilings and nine-over-nine sashes. The interior woodwork is fairly sophisticated, boasting finely-molded mantels, chair rail, and paneled wainscoting.³

After Henry Lane's death in 1797, an inventory was made of his estate, providing a fairly detailed account of the household furnishings. The standing furniture consisted of: "Nine beds and furniture, eighteen chairs, four small chairs, one desk, one chest of drawers, two walnut tables, three pine tables, one sideboard,

one small walnut chest, six trunks, one candlestand, one cupboard and furniture, one teaboard.”⁴ The Lane House had a separate kitchen building, and this list obviously includes kitchen as well as household furniture. Lane and his wife had four daughters and eighteen slaves, which accounts for the large number of beds.⁵



Figure 2. East elevation. The back section of the current structure, this was the original c. 1785 house built for Henry Lane. Nichols raised the original roof in 1826, and built a full two-story porch across this elevation with a door between the two second floor windows. In 1878 both the porch and the door were removed. The current porch is Colonial revival, built about 1910, and is the fourth porch on this location.

The only major piece in the current Mordecai House Collection from Henry Lane’s tenancy is a desk, made between 1775 and 1790 (fig. 3). Constructed of walnut, with yellow pine secondary, the desk appears to have been made in the Mecklenburg or Halifax County, Virginia, area.⁶ The quarter columns, ogee feet, and two blocked drawers on the interior are characteristics of several desks attributed to the shop that produced this example. The bookcase (not illustrated) now resting on the

desk is not original, although it is early nineteenth century and possibly represents eastern Piedmont North Carolina work. The bail-and-rosette brasses and interior drawer pulls — called “screw rings” in early inventories — appear to be original. This is most likely the “walnut desk . . . £16.10” that Henry Lane had purchased at auction from the estate of his father, local planter Joel Lane, in 1795.⁷



Figure 3. Desk, 1775-90, walnut with yellow pine secondary. HOA 44 3/8, WOA 44, DOA 24 3/8. MESDA research file (MRF) S-5188.

In 1817 the oldest Lane daughter, Margaret, married Moses Mordecai, from whom the house acquired its name. Mordecai, a promising young attorney, was born in New York city and had come to North Carolina with his family in 1797. His maternal grandfather was Myer Myers, the accomplished New York silversmith.⁸ The couple wed in December and moved into Henry Lane’s former house, along with Margaret’s three younger sisters.

Evidently the house was sparsely furnished (it had been rented out after Lane’s death), because on 17 September 1817 Moses

wrote to his brother Samuel, a merchant in Richmond, stating: "I will want some furniture, which I much beg you to procure for me."⁹ Enclosed with the letter was a list, which included numerous household furnishings (fig. 4). The list is so precise that it provides valuable insight to how the house subsequently was furnished. The fact that Moses sent north for furniture suggests that he wanted his home to be stylish but may have considered local cabinetmakers to be too expensive.¹⁰ He specified that all the formal furnishings — "a sideboard, a pr. dining tables, a sofa," as well as "1 bedstead, 1 toilet table, 2 bureaus" — were to be of mahogany. The rest of the bedroom furniture, "3 bedsteads (camp), 3 toilet tables," were to be of Painted Wood, such as I saw at Mr. Marx." A man by the name of Lewis Marks was one-third owner of a cabinet shop in Petersburg, Virginia, between 1816 and 1818, and this could be the shop to which Moses referred.¹¹ For seating he ordered "1 doz. Chairs — mat bottom — or such as you may think better — not very Costly." The list also included a number of smaller items, such as silver ("2 doz. knives and forks . . . 1 doz. Table spoons, 2 doz. Tea spoons . . . a sett of plated Casters"), two sets of china (one "table and one "tea"), and a "plate warmer."

The family letters preserved from the period follow the fascinating trail of the ordered furnishings. On 18 October 1817 Sam wrote to his sister Rachel in Warrenton, North Carolina, where the Mordecai family operated a school for girls, expressing misgivings about purchasing the furniture in Richmond:

I have not made the purchases he [Moses] ordered, nor could I have forwarded them from here — no vessel offering for Washington [North Carolina] or New Bern, and if sent by Petersburg they would be much injured and the expenses increased. But if he confirms the order I will execute it. My advice would be to obtain them from New York, where they would be obtained better and cheaper, with certainty of conveyance.¹²

Apparently Rachel took control of the arrangements, and on 30 October wrote to another sister, Ellen, who was visiting Sam in Richmond, that "I sent U. B. yesterday an order for the furniture, and without being explicit gave him to understand that the conjections he would naturally make might probably not fall far short of the reality."¹³ The "U. B." Rachel wrote of was her

a Bed Board - 75
 a set of dining Table, 85
 2 Card Tables, makogang
 a Sofa and
 1 Bedstead } 50
 1 Toilet Table
 2 Bureaus
 3 Bedsteads, Comp? } 18
 3 Toilet Tables, } painted wood. put in by Samuel W. May

1 doz Chairs - mat bottoms - a set as you may find better - not very costly
 2 Sets - Knives & Forks - 12/10
 2 Sets - Brackets & Irons. 16
 2 doz Knives & Forks - 24 of each } May 5 1/2
 2 " do do
 a set of plated Cutlery - 20
 1 doz Table Spoons
 2 doz Tea Spoons
 1 doz Ladles
 a set of Tea China -
 a set of Table China 37 1/2
 Salt Cellars -
 6 decanters
 2 doz Tumblers
 2 doz Wine Glasses
 2 Pitchers
 2 or 3 Glass Brandy Pitchers

a plate warmer - chafing dish - Bell metal kettle
 Warming - Candlesticks - Bread basket - Knife tray
 1 set Irish Shrubbery

Figure 4. List of furnishings ordered by Moses Mordecai, 17 Sept. 1817. Published with the permission of Duke University. The numbers after some of the items appear to be the price paid, possibly written in by Sam.

uncle, Benjamin Myers, youngest son of Myer Myers, who lived in New York city. By late 1817 New York probably was the leading cabinetmaking center in the United States, with a large number of shops producing goods for stock, unlike the late eighteenth century when almost everything was made to order. Evidently Benjamin Myers walked into one of the relatively fashionable warehouses and simply filled the order, because on 11 November Solomon Mordecai, Moses's brother who was studying medicine in Philadelphia, was "writing a line to Moses to enclose a letter respecting furniture/ this morning recd. from Uncle Benjn." ¹⁴

The furniture was shipped from New York to Richmond, where Sam added the smaller items and forwarded the entire order overland to Moses in Raleigh. On 6 November he wrote Rachel stating that "the first page of the enclosed letter for Moses will I fear excite two or three of his peculiar grunts . . . I have omitted a dozen articles neither of us thought of, such as dish covers &c." ¹⁵ Sam was concerned about the method of transport for the furniture and other goods on the final leg of the journey, stating in a letter to his sister Caroline on 30 November that "all the articles will be sent to Petersburg, to Moses's care, on whom he can direct a wagon to call, though I suppose the opportunities will never be plenty." ¹⁶

Moses was married on 9 December 1817 and had hoped the furnishings would arrive before the wedding. ¹⁷ This was not to be, as on 1 January 1818 Sam wrote that the "furniture was in Petersburg and I requested Mr. Wilson to forward it to Raleigh." ¹⁸ Moses received the shipment soon after, and on 26 January wrote Sam a letter of thanks:

I did not know the extent of my obligations to you until I commenced housekeeping. Now wherever I look and in whatever I am engaged within doors I am reminded how much I owe to your superior management. I am really more comfortable fixed as to household matters than almost any of my acquaintance and should be perfectly satisfied. . . . ¹⁹

In addition to the new furniture, Moses added a fresh coat of paint to the former Lane House, including elegant mahogany graining on the wainscot and marbleizing on the baseboards in the smaller southern room. ²⁰ The refurbished house impressed his sister Ellen, who visited in the spring of 1818 and wrote Sam that she was staying at "Moses Manor," where everything is

neatness itself . . . [the] New York Furniture is the best. . . I have ever seen.”²¹ She noted in her own journal that “the furniture Moses received from New York is plain and handsome, and matrimony with him has not been unaccompanied by a comfortable home.”²²



Figure 5. Sideboard, 1817, mahogany, mahogany veneer with mahogany, white pine, and poplar secondary. HOA 43, WOA 60 3/4, DOA 20 1/4. MRF S-12,240.

Most of the major pieces from the 1817 purchase survive and form the core of the current collection. Featuring bold turnings, crisp carving, and bright, well-matched veneers, the pieces as a group are quite representative of New York furniture during the late Neoclassical period. Because of the division of labor in the larger shops, as well as the liberal use of competitor's designs, it is virtually impossible to assign this group to any one maker or shop.

The largest extant case piece from the 1817 purchase is a mahogany sideboard (fig. 5). The drawer frames are constructed of mahogany instead of the usual white pine, suggesting that the piece was not “venture quality” but was made for sale in New York. The animal-paw and acanthus-carved feet are quite typical of New York, and in fact could have been bought as stock parts from a specialist carver. The veneer on the cabinet doors is vibrant and sequence-matched; veneer is used as well to encase the columns, a typical New York feature. The center drawers are flanked by stiles ornamented with reeding arched at the top. The single-serving slide, detachable splashboard, and the entire arrangement of the facade all follow a standard New York format frequently encountered in virtually identical examples recorded elsewhere in the South.



Figure 6. Dining table, 1817, mahogany and mahogany veneer with mahogany, white pine, and oak secondary. HOA 28 5/8, WOA 48, DOA 142 1/2. The table is shown with all three sections, although one demilune and leaf are not extended. MRF S-12,241.

The mahogany banquet or dining table (fig. 6) is in three sections: a rectangular center section and two demilune ends. The brass-tipped feet and the truncation of the spiralled reeding of the legs are common New York features. It is not unusual to find center sections of these tables with unadorned tapered legs. This section was meant to be utilitarian, for it extended to allow the table to seat up to twelve and would have been folded and placed against a wall when not in use. The drop leaves of the center section are rule jointed and the leaves of the end sections are butt jointed.

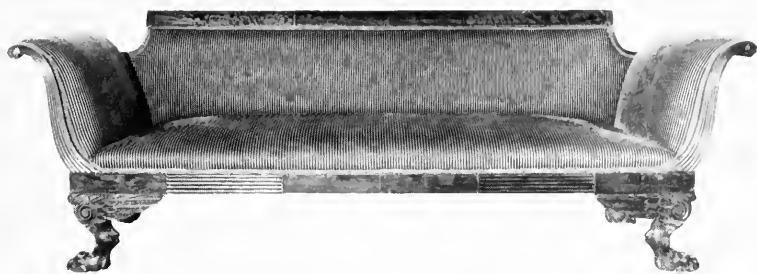


Figure 7. Sofa, 1817, mahogany and mahogany veneer, secondary not recorded. HOA 32 1/8, WOA 93 3/4, DOA 32 1/4. MRF S-12,245.

In terms of design and proportion, probably the finest piece from the 1817 purchase is the sofa (fig. 7). The frame could not be examined because of the upholstery, but the exposed elements are mahogany and mahogany veneer. The reeded arms sweep out gracefully from the seat, and the crotch-figured veneers are book-matched. The rear feet are carved, in contrast with many sofas in the same style made with plain “stump” feet at the back. The present upholstery has a much fuller profile than the tight covering preferred on Neoclassical sofas. Originally the silk or horsehair fabric would have been close to the frame, with matching bolsters at each end.



Figure 7a. Detail of fig. 7.



Figure 8. Bedstead, 1817, mahogany with yellow pine rails. HOA 91 1/2, WOA 66 1/2, DOA 82. The cornice is mahogany veneer over an unidentified secondary wood. MRF S-12,247.

The “1 bedstead” that Moses specified be of mahogany also is part of the Mordecai House collection (fig. 8). The acanthus carving of the urns is crisp but florid, and the turnings are bold (fig. 8a). The swelling feet are in the standard New York style. The cornice and rails are somewhat puzzling. The cornice most likely was made in Raleigh; although it is Neoclassical in design, its construction and use of coarsely-grained veneer are relatively naive. The rails are made of yellow pine, which suggests that they

were later replacements or were fitted after the bedstead reached Raleigh. However, a great deal of yellow pine was exported to the North, and it is equally possible that the rails were made with rest of the bedstead.



Figure 8a. Detail of bedpost in fig. 8.

The only surviving piece of painted furniture from the 1817 purchase is a toilet table (fig. 9). Constructed of white pine with maple legs, the form of this piece, with a shaped shelf resting upon end stretchers, is a typical New York design, as are the swelling feet. Remnants of graining are visible on the surface, as well as double painted lines outlining the drawer faces in a simulation of stringing. The brass pulls are original.



Figure 9. Chamber table, 1817, white pine with maple legs, remnants of paint graining on surface. Original brass pulls. HOA 35 1/2, WOA 36, DOA 20. MRF S-12,246.

The two card tables that Moses ordered are not in the current collection; however, one appears in a circa 1890 photograph of the front hall (fig. 10).²³ Although the actual table could not be examined, some general conclusions can be made from the photograph. The table is almost certainly mahogany, and there appear to be not only brass tipping of the feet, as on the dining table, but brass mounts at the top of the legs as well. Both the turnings and carving of the upper section of the card table leg compare well with the foot posts of the bedpost (fig. 8a).

A number of smaller furnishings acquired during Moses Mordecai's lifetime are also part of the current collection. From the 1817 purchase the plate warmer, a wire fireplace fender, a pair of andirons, and various pieces of Canton dinner china survive. Two portraits that hung in the house also survive. One



Figure 10. Front hall of the Mordecai House, c. 1890. The card table is from the 1817 order. The clock is also illustrated in fig. 14.

is a profile drawing of Moses which is attributed to Charles B. J. Fevret de Saint-Memin (fig. 11), and the other is an oil of Mrs. Mary Sumner Blount by Pietro Bonani.²⁴

Margaret Lane Mordecai died in 1821, after the birth of her third child. In 1824 Moses married her younger sister, Nancy Lane. He soon became ill and died in September of that year, leaving Nancy to give birth to their only child in October.²⁵ By this time



Figure 11. Profile drawing of Moses Mordecai by Charles B. J. Saint-Memin, 1805-15, ink and wash on paper. 13 x 16 1/2. MRF S-12,244.

there were eight people living in the small house: Nancy and her two sisters, Moses's four children, and Moses's half-brother, George Washington Mordecai. Because of the crowded conditions in the house, Moses had added a codicil to his will in August 1824 in which he left "the sum of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars . . . to building and furnishing a comfortable house for the use of . . . [the] family."²⁶ George Mordecai was named executor of the estate.

George and Nancy decided to enlarge the existing house and in May 1825 engaged William Nichols to construct the additions.²⁷

Nichols was a prominent architect and builder who had recently completed the remodeling of the 1792-6 North Carolina State House.²⁸ Fortunately, the account book George kept during the building and furnishing of the additions has been preserved. Evidently the work was completed in late 1826, since the last payment to Nichols was in December.²⁹ By early 1827 George had spent over \$4,000 for the building and furnishing of the additions — well over the allotted \$2,500. The Greek revival style additions more than doubled the size of the house, as well as changing the orientation of the front facade from the east to south (fig. 1). The main addition was a five room, two story section which was built against the southern end of the original structure, creating a T-plan.

The enlarged house was furnished with the few remaining Henry Lane pieces, the Moses Mordecai pieces, and a shipment of new furniture from Baltimore and New York. Entered in the account book on 31 July 1826, the shipment included “2 bedsteads @22 [\$]44, 1 bedstead 20, 2 doz. chairs 38, 1 doz. chairs 16, 3 — freight from Baltimore and New York.”³⁰ Other items purchased included “Carpet & Matting [\$]89 . . . andirons 2 pr. 22.50, 2 pair fenders 17.50 . . . 3 3/4 yds. Hair Cloth for sofa. . . .”³¹

One of the three bedsteads from the 1826 purchase is in the current collection (fig. 12). Constructed of solid mahogany, the simplicity of the piece strongly suggests that it was intended for southern importation. The poplar side rails are original, although they have been lowered 7 5/8 inches. The other two rails are yellow pine replacements. The carving as well as the reeding at the top and bottom of the posts is in the New York style, although it is less refined than that of the 1817 bedstead.

The only other pieces of furniture from the 1826 purchase in the current collection are three black and gold fancy chairs in various states of preservation (fig. 13). The chairs are from Baltimore, as the account book verifies; they are closely related examples in the Philadelphia and Baltimore museums of art.³²

The Mordecais also patronized Raleigh cabinetmakers, at least on a small scale. The account book George kept lists three payments to William Thompson, a well-known Raleigh cabinet-maker. The payments made during 1824-6 were: seventy-five cents for “repairs to sideboard,” a “knife box . . . 1.50,” and \$7.75 “on account.”³³ It is unclear what the final amount is for, but Thompson had a large warehouse in which he sold northern-made

furniture as well as his own products.³⁴ The current collection does include a few pieces of eastern piedmont furniture from the early nineteenth century, the most important of which is a tall mahogany clock (fig. 14), probably made between 1810 and 1825.³⁵ The general style of the case and the scrolled pediment are in the Rococo manner, but the reeded columns of the hood and waist as well as the reeded keystone and turned bosses in the pediment are late Neoclassical elements. The case is eastern



Figure 12. Bedstead, 1826, mahogany with poplar and yellow pine rails. HOA 83 1/2, WOA 66 3/4, DOA 81. MRF S-12,248.



Figure 13. Fancy chair, Baltimore, 1826, poplar with turned maple legs, rush seat. HOA 31, WOA 18 5/8, DOA 20 1/4. There has been some overpainting of the original design. MRF S-12,242.

piedmont, perhaps Raleigh, but shows more than a passing familiarity with New York work. This is not surprising, for in at least one instance a North Carolina cabinetmaker who advertised in Raleigh newspapers employed a man trained in New York.³⁶

It is not known when the clock became a part of the Mordecais' furnishings. In April 1818 Moses wrote Sam that "we are very much at loss for a timepiece . . . I do not like the old-fashioned



Figure 14. Tall clock, 1810-25, mahogany, mahogany veneer with walnut, poplar and yellow pine secondary. HOA 100 1/4, WOA 20 5/8, DOA 10. The eight-day movement was not examined but is presumably English. MRF S-12,239.

corner cupboard clocks, and no other kind can be had here.”³⁷ Sam apparently sent an early factory-made shelf clock, but the ungrateful Moses wrote back in May that “I fear [the clock you sent] is too cheap, but if it should not answer our purpose I can readily have it disposed of and will trouble you with a second commission.”³⁸ No further correspondence about a clock exists, and it is quite possible that Moses acquiesced and purchased the clock in the current collection — which certainly fits the description of an “old-fashioned corner cupboard clock,” if the broken-scrolled pediment is compared with many cupboards of the period.

The Mordecai House was acquired from Burke Haywood Little, Henry Lane’s great-great grandson, by the city of Raleigh in 1967. A group of dedicated citizens formed to restore the house and purchase the family furnishings, which were in storage. The house was partially restored before the 1972 opening, and the furnishings were arranged in hypothetical room settings. Mordecai House now awaits a complete restoration of its structure. Recent research has made it evident that a program to refurnish and reinterpret its interiors is needed to reflect the tastes of five generations of the prominent southern family.

Mr. Zogry is a staff member at Old Salem. This article is based on a research project completed while he was a student at North Carolina State University.

FOOTNOTES

1. The collections are: The Little-Mordecai Papers, various Wake County records, both in the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh; various Mordecai Family Papers at the Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Jacob Mordecai Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham.
2. All information about early Raleigh history in this study is from Elizabeth Reid Murray, *Wake: Capital County of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Capital County, 1983). There is some disagreement as to whether the original Lane House was two full stories, or a story and a half. Physical evidence suggests that by the time it was enlarged in 1825-6, it was two full stories — although this could have been done by Moses Mordecai between 1817-24.
3. Evidence of the original woodwork exists in the first floor northern room, as well as the second floor northern room, which contains the original first floor southern room mantel.
4. "Inventory of the estate of Henry Lane, decd.,," 10 March 1798, Wake County Clerk of Court Record Book E, microfilm, North Carolina State Archives.
5. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Heads of Families of the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790: North Carolina* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1908), Wake County, volume, 104.
6. Luke Beckerdite, "Style and Technology Shifts in One Virginia Shop," *Journal of early Southern decorative Arts* 9, no. 2 (Nov. 1983): 21-42.
7. "Account of the Sales of the Estate of Joel Lane, decd.,," 21-24 Oct. 1795, Wake County Clerk of Court Records Book E, microfilm.
8. Much of the family genealogy and history can be found in John Brooke Mordecai's "Family Notes," compiled in 1951 and privately published. Another good source is Carolina Cohen, *Records of the Myers, Hayes, and Mordecai Families, 1707 to 1913*, privately published.
9. Moses Mordecai to Samuel Moredecai, 27 Sept. 1817, Jacob Mordecai Papers, Duke University.
10. Apparently it was generally cheaper to purchase northern-made goods than buy from local cabinetmakers. John Alcock, a cabinetmaker in Richmond advertised in 1807 that he had furniture "on low terms, as can be bought in New York" (*Richmond Enquirer*, 17 Jan. 1809). In 1817 he advertised "mahogany furniture which I will sell at New York prices, or ten percent lower than any made in Virginia" (*Rich. Eng.*, 17 Mar. 1817). Even as late as 1843, Raleigh cabinetmaker William Thompson placed an ad in the *Carolina Gazette* which stated he would sell furniture "at such prices as to leave no excuse for sending to the North for furniture" (Mar. 1843).
11. Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia Records, 53, 538; *Intelligencer and Petersburg Commercial Advertiser*, 6 Feb. 1818.
12. Samuel Mordecai to Ellen Mordecai, 18 Oct. 1817, Southern Historical Collection.

13. Rachel Mordecai to Ellen Mordecai, 18 Oct. 1817, Southern Historical Collection.
14. Unsigned letter to Rachel Mordecai [?], 11 Nov. 1817, Southern Historical Collection.
15. Samuel Mordecai to Rachel Mordecai, 6 Nov. 1817, Jacob Mordecai Papers.
16. Samuel Mordecai to Carolina Mordecai, 30 Nov. 1817, Southern Historical Collection.
17. Moses Mordecai to Ellen Mordecai, 5 Nov. 1817, Southern Historical Collection.
18. Samuel Mordecai to Rachel Mordecai, 1 Jan. 1818, Southern Historical Collection.
19. Moses Mordecai to Samuel Mordecai, 26 Jan. 1818, Jacob Mordecai Papers.
20. A deteriorated but untouched piece of mahoganized wainscot and marbleized baseboard is extant under the 1826 Nichols staircase in the first floor southern room of the original Lane House, which is now the stairhall. The paneling looks remarkably like that of the Catawba Dining room in MESDA.
21. Ellen Mordecai to Samuel Mordecai, 20 Apr. 1818, Jacob Mordecai Papers.
22. Journal of Ellen Mordecai, 26 Mar. 1818, Southern Historical Collection.
23. Martha Mordecai's photograph album, North Carolina Museum of History Collection, Raleigh.
24. Mrs. Blount was a close family friend of the Mordecai's, and in her will she left Moses "my portrait lately taken . . . in Washington City" (Will of Mrs. Mary Summer blount, 1822, Wake County Wills, North Carolina State Archives). Bonani was an Italian artist who had come to the United States to paint the ceiling of the House of Representatives chamber in the capitol, which is now Statuary Hall.
25. Brooke Mordecai, "Family Notes," 31.
26. Will of Moses Mordecai, 1824, Wake County Wills, North Carolina State Archives.
27. Estate of Moses Mordecai account book, 1824-34, entry of 25 May 1825: "William Nichols on acct. of house . . . \$383.64," Southern Historical Collection.
28. John L. Sanders, "The North Carolina State Capitol of 1840," *Antiques* 128 (Sept. 1985): 475.
29. Payments to Nichols were made on: 25 May, 22 July, 19 Aug., and 2 Sept. 1825, 17 Apr. and 5 Dec. 1826, totalling \$2,041.34. This figure did not include such "extras" as paint, window glass, clapboard, nails or locks.
30. Moses Mordecai Account Bk., 31 July 1826.
31. Ibid.
32. Celia Jackson Otto, *American Furniture of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Viking Press, 1965), no.126; Baltimore Museum of Art, *Baltimore Painted Furniture, 1800-1840* (Baltimore: Baltimore Museum of Art, 1972), 69. Quite interestingly, the chair in the Baltimore Museum was donated by a Ralph Mordecai, and two identical chairs are in the collection of the Moses Myers House in Norfolk. Moses Myers was the nephew of Myer Myers and was therefore Moses Mordecai's cousin.

33. Moses Mordecai Account Bk., 21 Sept. 1824, 1 Feb., 21 June 1826.
34. Raleigh *Carolina Gazette*, 7 Mar. 1843.
35. The movement could not be examined, but the face is a typical Osborne or Birmingham import, and it can be assumed that the entire works are English. The movement is eight-day, with a second hand, date dial, and moon dial.
36. John Bivins, Jr., *The Furniture of Coastal North Carolina* (Winston-Salem, N.C.: Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts), 496. Thomas Reynolds of Warrenton, North Carolina, advertised in the *Raleigh Register* on 11 April 1811 that he had "employed a person . . . [who] worked in New York, Philadelphia, Norfolk, &c."
37. Moses Mordecai to Sam Mordecai, 15 Apr. 1818, Jacob Mordecai Papers.
38. Moses Mordecai to Samuel Mordecai, 14 May 1818, Jacob Mordecai Papers.

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MESDA seeks manuscripts which treat virtually any facet of southern decorative art for publication in the JOURNAL. The MESDA staff would also like to examine any privately-held primary research material (documents and manuscripts) from the South, and southern newspapers published in 1820 and earlier.

Some back issues of the *Journal*
are available.

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